

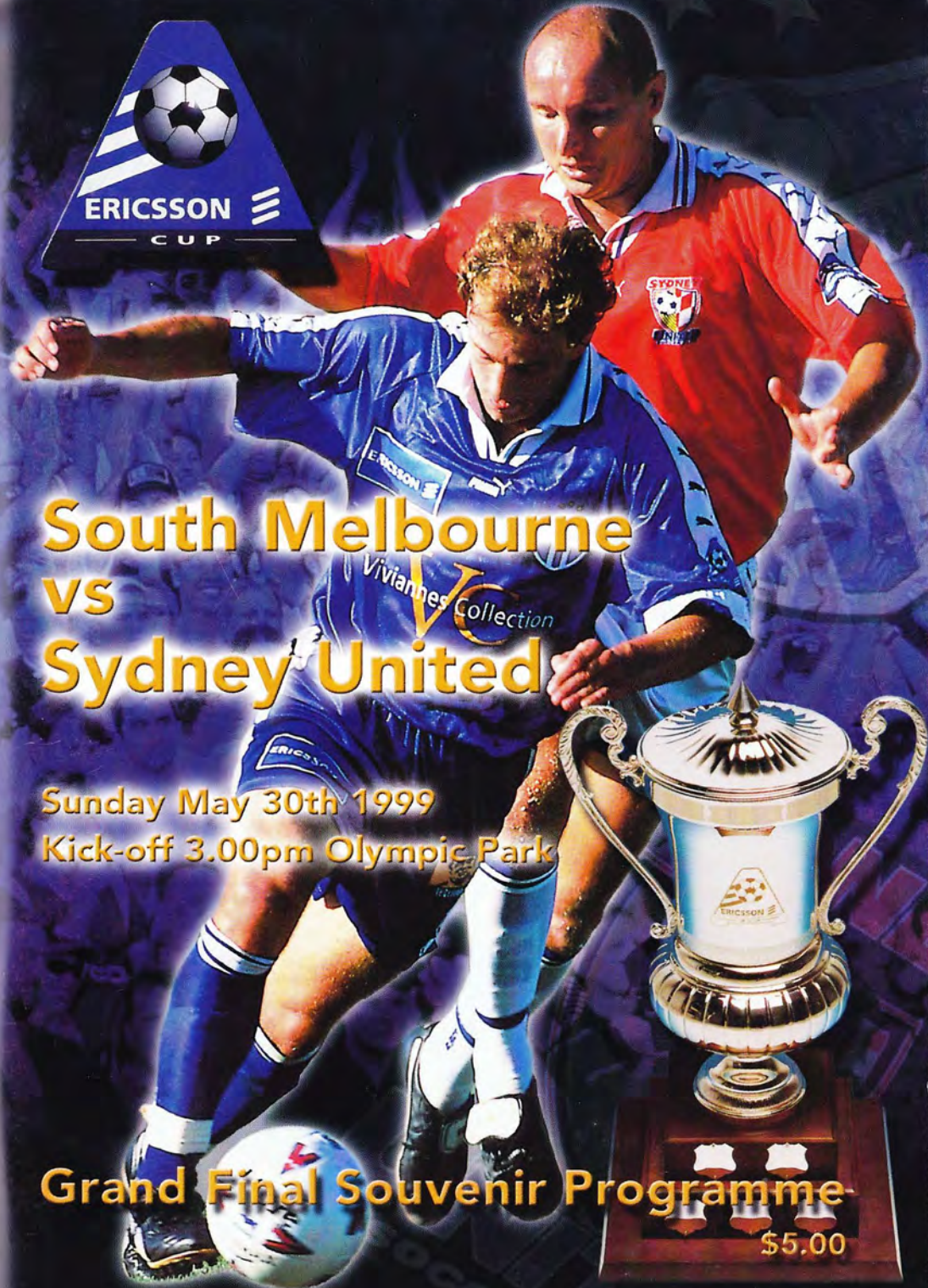


South Melbourne vs Sydney United

Sunday May 30th 1999
Kick-off 3.00pm Olympic Park

Grand Final Souvenir Programme

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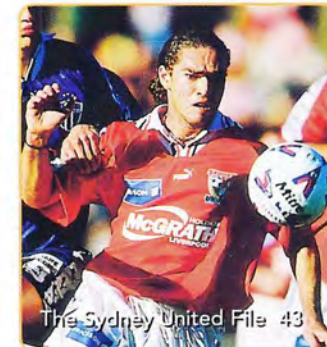
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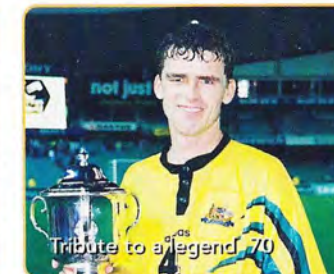
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From the Clubs

South Melbourne

Another year and another Grand Final. There is no doubt that 1998 and 1999 have been the most outstanding in the history of the South Melbourne Soccer Club. One year after having won the Championship, we again find ourselves at Olympic Park defending our title and striving for back-to-back Championships and rightfully becoming the team of the millennium.

Since the inception of the National Soccer League in 1977, South Melbourne has had some terrific individual players come through the club and some memorable teams. However, no team has had the opportunity of winning back-to-back Championships such as the one that takes the field today.

We proudly represent Victoria as the only club in any sporting code to currently hold a National title. Our number one ticket holder, The Honourable Jeff Kennett MLA is present today who I am sure as a Victorian, is proud of the club's outstanding achievements.

We welcome the President, Committee, Coach and players of the Sydney United Soccer Club, who have equally had an outstanding year.

To our major sponsor, Mr. Angelo Bouzis of Vivianes Collection and the other sponsors and supporters, we are grateful for your ongoing support which has helped us develop into a well respected sporting club and today have the opportunity to create history.

Let's get right behind the team who deserve all your support in their quest to win back-to-back Championships, GO SOUTHS!

George Vasilopoulos - South Melbourne Soccer Club President



Sydney United

On behalf of the South Melbourne Soccer Club, we welcome all supporters and guests to the 1998/1999 Ericsson Cup Grand Final in which Melbourne has again qualified as the host city.

We also congratulate Sydney United for their qualification into the Grand Final.

Today's game could make South Melbourne the team of the 90's with a possible 3 championships during this decade alone.

Similarly, back to back championships are rarely achieved in the modern sporting era and that alone would be unprecedented in the club's history.

It is widely recognised that Victoria is the home of sport and yet in most national sporting codes, Victorian clubs have not won anything significant over the last few years, except for Soccer and in particular, South Melbourne.

We look forward to the support of all Victorians so that we maintain that No.1 mantle.

Importantly, the Champion today will go on and represent Australia in the FIFA World Club Championship, possibly the greatest single opportunity for any Australian Club.

On behalf of all Victorians let's demonstrate our vocal support for the team and responsibly celebrate South Melbourne's success.

Marko Franovic - Sydney United Executive President



ANNOUNCEMENT

- Entry inside the perimeter fence of the playing area is prohibited at all times - offenders will be prosecuted.
- The setting alight of, igniting, or discharging of any type of object including fireworks, signal or smoke flares is strictly prohibited.
- All spectators are requested to vacate the ground within 15 minutes of the end of the game.
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Daily Telegraph
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What a Great Season

Ericsson Cup makes it mark



Robbie Slater acknowledges the crowd in Northern Spirit's first year.

Soccer Australia could not have hoped for better even if they had scripted it themselves. By every measure, the 1998-99 Ericsson Cup season will surely go down as one of the great triumphs of the 22-year history of the national league.

Indeed, it will stand as the benchmark for the future...something tangible to hold on to and to build upon as football in this country enters the new millennium.

At a time when some so-called high profile sports were floundering, our great game finally started to emerge from the abyss and put itself into the mainstream of Australian sporting culture.

Suddenly the other codes have started looking over their shoulder. Even the head honcho of the AFL, Wayne Jackson, recognises the real threat posed by the world game.



Bernd Stange made his mark with Perth Glory helped by stars like John Markovski and Rob Trajkovski.

And all of this because of the emergence of the Ericsson Cup, often described as the "Problem Child" but now looked upon as a viable, and indeed, much more marketable product.

Record attendances, buoyed by the inclusion of Northern Spirit, the continued growth of Perth Glory and a willingness by other clubs, notably Marconi Fairfield, to embrace new marketing initiatives has given our sport the fillip it so desperately needed.

And how the fans flocked to the grounds!

For the first time in its troubled history, the League crashed past the magical one million mark for attendance figures for the preliminary season with the long awaited breakthrough coming in round 26 - four rounds before the end of the competition proper.

Of course, the Glory and Spirit led the way with the Sydneysiders pulling off all sorts of remarkable achievements in their debut season, including setting a record for the biggest crowd (18,985) for a non-finals Ericsson Cup match, which had stood since the late 1970s.

Both clubs ended up averaging over 16,000 per home match though the more established Glory finished on top in that little battle.

And the crowd trend has continued in the finals with this season's play-offs far eclipsing the record set during the 1996-97 series, which were helped by the record 41,000 crowd that watched Brisbane Strikers beat Sydney United at Suncorp Stadium.

Again, Glory has led the way, attracting crowds of

25,000 and 28,000 at the WACA for play-off matches against Adelaide City then Marconi. Along the way they captured the imagination of the West Australian public and, more importantly, the media and political world.

WA premier Richard Court was quick to jump on the Glory bandwagon and has promised to build a dedicated soccer stadium, which will accommodate 25,000 fans. Maybe you should make that a 50,000-seater stadium, Mr Court!

Out on the paddock there was some terrific football in a season which produced one of the tightest competitions in recent times.

After all their problems at the start of the season when they lost a host of players followed by the financial strife which almost saw them fail to finish the championship, few will argue that Sydney United deserved to win the minor premiership.

But, they only clinched the title in the ultimate round of the season, slipping past gallant South Melbourne, who had no say after having a bye in the final round.

After a mid-season slump, Glory recovered well to finish third with Marconi also doing magnificently after going through a horror spell which saw them lose six on the trot and slip to ninth spot at one stage.

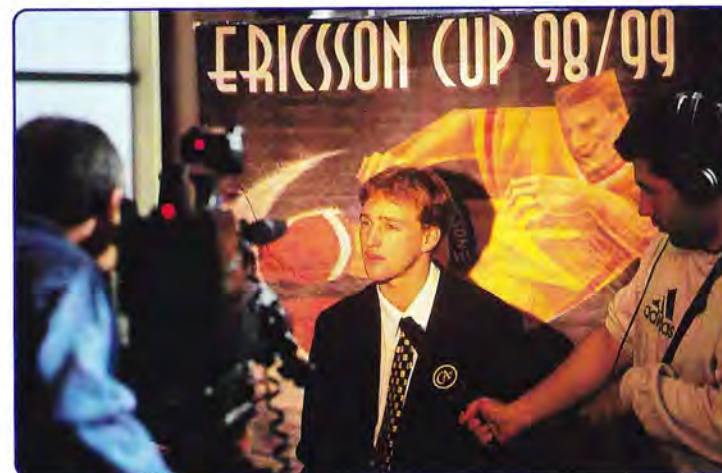
Spirit and perennial finalists Adelaide City rounded off the top six while Olympic were maybe a little unfortunate to miss out after losing to City in the last round.

Last season's grand finalists Carlton were a major disappointment, suffering from the loss of key players to overseas, injuries and suspensions, but, in contrast, Newcastle Breakers had their best ever performance in the Ericsson Cup, finishing eighth with 40 points under Lee Sterrey, who was a revelation in his debut as a senior coach.

It was both heartening and a delight to see a couple of veterans in Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater return to their roots after distinguished careers in Europe. They spearheaded Spirit's charge to the finals.

Hopefully, they have started a trend which will see many more of our overseas-based stars returning home to put something back into the Ericsson Cup. Apart from Arnold and Slater, we saw Carl Veart (Adelaide City) and Adem Poric (Olympic and Northern Spirit) and Robert Enes (Spirit) also find their way home after stints in England.

Sadly, and unavoidably, the League also lost a host of rich talent, including the likes of Vince Grella (Italy), Bill Damianos, Andy Vlahos, Alvin Ceccoli (Greece), Tansel Baser (Turkey) and Kosta Salapatsidis (Spain) to



Paul Trimboli launches South Melbourne's participation in the Ericsson Cup finals series.

name but a few. No doubt more will follow at the end of this season.

Hopefully, however, Australian soccer will continue to produce a rich vein of talent. Add to that the continued growth of the Ericsson Cup and a World Cup spot in 2002 and maybe the AFL's worst fears will be realised sooner than we all expect!!

By RAY GATT The Australian



Minor premiers Sydney United after winning their way into the Grand Final.

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The Final Series

4th v 5th Elimination Final – 1st Leg

Spirit Park Stalemate

Marconi 0
Northern Spirit 0



Marconi's
Francis
Awaritefe and
Spirit's Mark
Rudan.

30/04/99: A record 17,246 attendance was on hand to witness Northern Spirit and Marconi Fairfield produce a bruising but even encounter at Spirit Park in the first leg of the 4th v 6th Elimination Final. The 0-0 scoreline did not reflect the fact that both sides had their scoring chances, especially Spirit's Kresimir Marusic and Brendan Renaud for the visitors.

2nd Leg

Marconi victorious

Marconi 2
Northern Spirit 1



09/05/99: The second leg at Bossley Park saw the Stallions clinch the match and progress through to the Minor semi-final stage following a nailbiting 2-1 win over Northern Spirit. A crowd of 11,319 watched Marconi take the lead in the 7th minute of first-half stoppage time through a Mike Smith header and then moved further ahead minutes after the restart when Zeljko Babic took advantage of a goalkeeper judgment error by slipping the ball into an open net. Graham Arnold pulled one back for Spirit, but the national league newcomers ran out of luck in their search for another breakthrough.



3rd v 6th Elimination Final
1st Leg

All square at Hindmarsh

Adelaide City 0
Perth Glory 0

02/05/99: There was everything to play for following a tension filled scoreless draw at Hindmarsh Stadium between Adelaide City and Perth Glory. The Zebras hurled everything at their visitors in search of a breakthrough, but the Glory rearguard, especially goalkeeper Anthony Franken, stood firm. Despite a scarcity of goals, many Adelaide supporters rated the match as one of their team's best this season.

Tony Franken was in top form last week.



The capacity crowd at the WACA ground last Saturday night.

Major Semi-Final – 1st Leg

South Melbourne secure win

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2
SYDNEY UNITED 1

09/05/99: Sydney United were declared slight favourites to qualify from the Major Semi-Final stage despite losing 2-1 to South Melbourne at Bob Jane Stadium. After a fairly ordinary start, Michael Curcija broke the deadlock on the stroke of half-time when he followed up and put away a piece of Paul Trimboli magic. The home side made it 2-0 nine minutes into the second-half when New Zealand international Vaughan Coveny headed home a Goran Lozanovski corner. United however, produced the goal of the game when Richard Plesa found the mark in the 72nd minute with a glorious strike from all of 35 metres.

South Melbourne celebrates the winning goal.



2nd Leg Pumas Fall Short

SYDNEY UNITED 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 0

16/05/99: South Melbourne secured home ground advantage for the grand final after a scoreless draw with Sydney United at Edensor Park. The 2-1 aggregate victory meant that the Pumas had to face and beat a confident Perth Glory side the following week in order to have another crack at the Melbourne club. United's Mile Sterjovski should have punished a defensive blunder from Steve Iosifidis in the 64th minute, but he surprisingly shot wide of the mark. South's Con Blatsis had his side's best chance in the 30th minute when his header crashed into the underside of the crossbar.



Sydney United's Joe Vrkic races for possession in front of South Melbourne's Vaughan Coveny.

Minor Semi-Final

PERTH GLORY 1
MARCONI FAIRFIELD 0

Glory Marches On



A happy Glory camp after victory against Marconi Fairfield

15/05/99: The league's highest scorers, Perth Glory, moved through to the next round thanks to an own goal from Marconi's Buddy Farah after 21 minutes. The young defender was attempting to clear a tricky Troy Halpin corner, only to succeed in finding the roof of his own net. A quality save from Anthony Franken to a Zeljko Babic strike just before the break, and a solid marking performance by Jamie Harnwell, on Stallion's dangerous Francis Awaritefe, ensured the home side would progress - much to the delight of a new pre-grand final record crowd of 27,556 at the WACA.

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Preliminary Final

United through

SYDNEY UNITED 2
PERTH GLORY 1

23/05/99: Sydney United moved into this afternoon's grand final after a solid 2-1 win over Perth Glory at Marconi Stadium. Glory had no less than three scoring opportunities cleared off the line in the opening minutes before goals to Mile Sterjovski and Dave Berry meant an end to Glory's finals campaign; save for a late consolation from substitute Con Boutsianis.

Tony Franken's sensational season encountered a cruel ending when he was sent-off by referee Mark Shield five minutes before the end for handballing outside his penalty area.



Sydney United players Michael Santalab, Richard Plesa, Jacob Burns and Velimir Kupresak enjoy the victory.

1999 Ericsson Cup Final Series - "The Ultimate Goal"

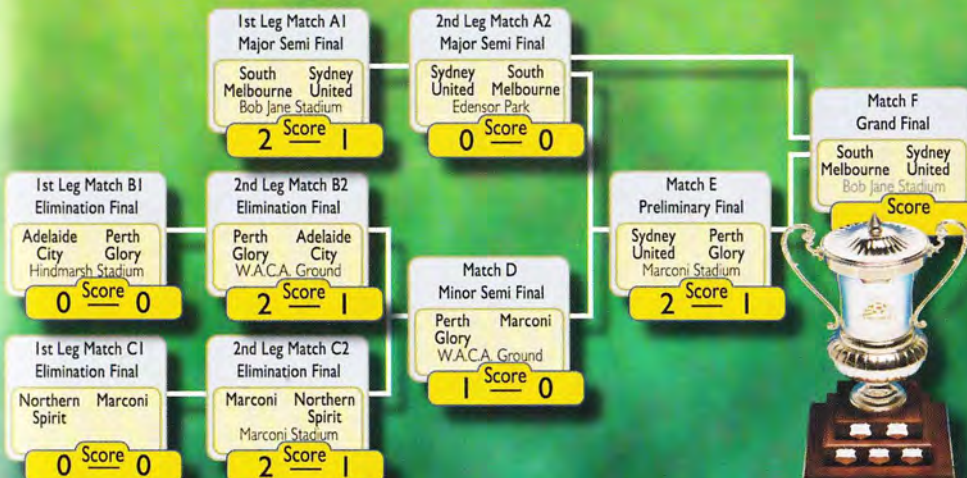
Week Ending
2 May 1999

Week Ending
9 May 1999

Week Ending
16 May 1999

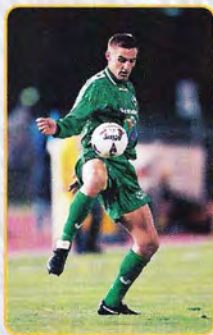
Week Ending
23 May 1999

Week Ending
30 May 1999



StarTips

Some of Australia's leading Soccer identities selections for today's game.



David Zdrilic

BILL DAMIANOS

(Olyroo Midfielder, formerly with South Melbourne, currently with Skoda Xanthi in the Greek 1st Division)

South Melbourne 2-0

The team will be desperate for back to back grand final victories - basically, we're going to be more hungry for it.

DAVID ZDRILIC

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney United, currently with SSV Ulm in the German 2nd Division)

Sydney United 1-0

United unlucky in the first two games, and third time lucky will be ours!

FRANK FARINA

(Coach, Marconi Fairfield)

South Melbourne 2-1

ANDREW MARTH

(Captain, Carlton S.C.)

South Melbourne 2-0

South's defence will shut down Sydney United and South will score on the break.

LORENZ KINDTNER

(former Olyroo, formerly with Sunshine George Cross, currently with KV Oostende in the Belgian 1st Division)

South Melbourne 2-1

CRAIG MOORE

(Socceroo, currently playing with Rangers in the Scottish Premier League)

South Melbourne 2-1

DANNY TIATTO

(Former Olyroo, formerly with Melbourne Knights, currently playing with Manchester City in the English 2nd Division)

South Melbourne 2-1

PETER TSEKENIS

(Captain, UTS Sydney Olympic)

South Melbourne 1-0

JOE BISKIC

(Coach, Melbourne Knights)

Sydney United 2-0

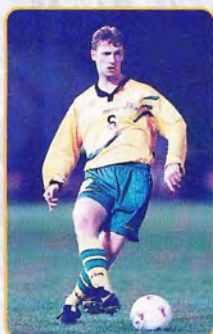
Sydney United is a better team

ANDREW BERNAL

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney Olympic, currently with Reading in the English 2nd Division)

Sydney United 2-1

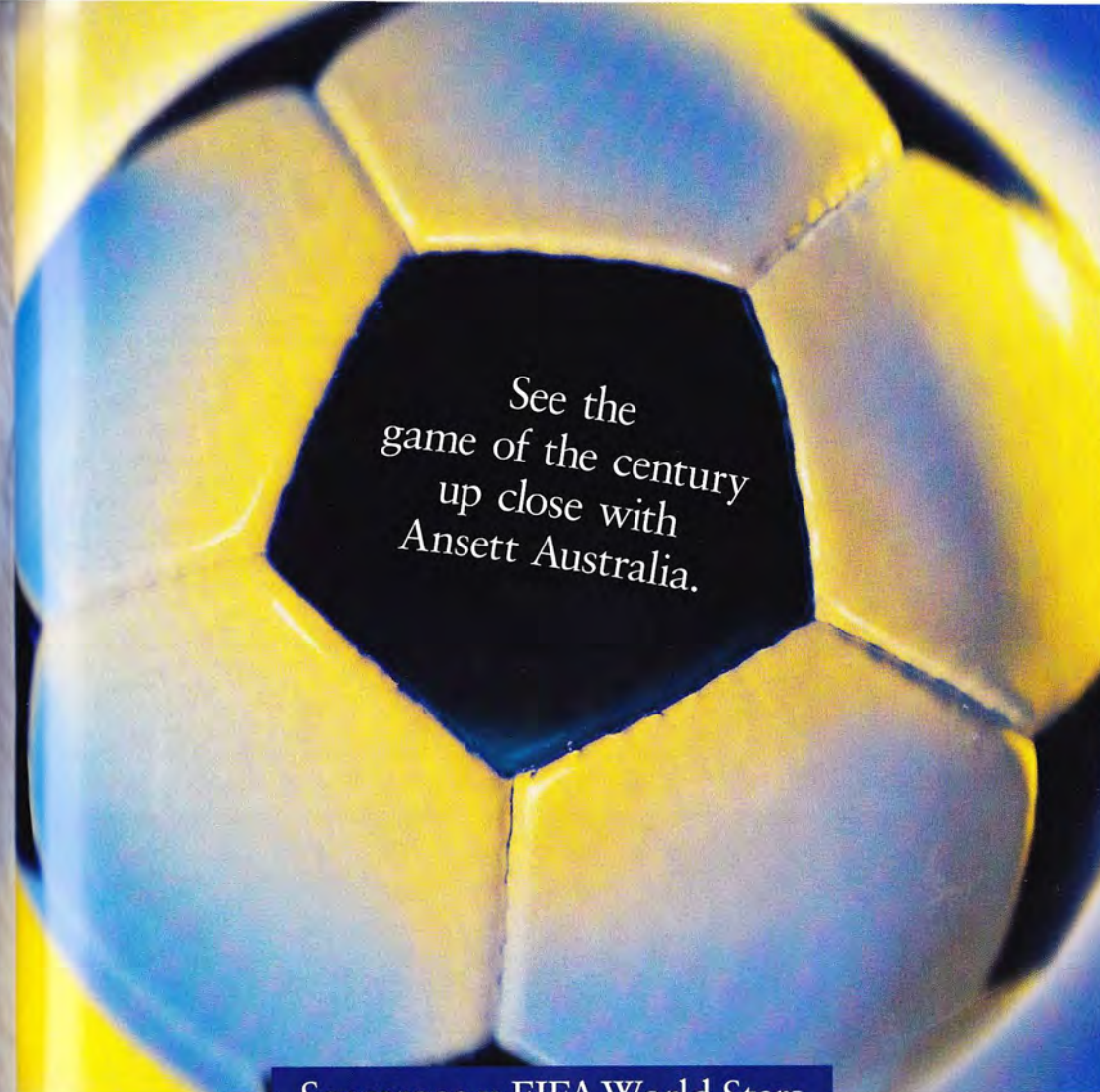
David Mitchell's done a terrific job at Sydney United, and besides the fact he's a smashing bloke, I think he and the team deserve the success



Craig Moore



Andrew Bernal



Socceroos v FIFA World Stars

See the Socceroos in action against the FIFA World Stars at the Official Opening of Sydney's flagship Olympic venue, Stadium Australia. As the presenting sponsor, Ansett Australia can offer you entry to the stadium and an exclusive seat to experience all the excitement of the game of the century. This spectacular event kicks off on the Queen's Birthday weekend, and seats are filling fast. To score a \$199 A-class ticket or a \$129 B-class ticket and a great fare from Ansett Australia, call 13 13 44.

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Big Game Preview

Popular sentiment this afternoon will probably reside with Sydney United - a club that has never won the championship and a team which has been forced to overcome so many obstacles during the course of a turbulent season.

Harsh reality, however, suggests the Pumas may be disappointed in their quest to make it third time lucky after agonising grand final defeats in 1988 and 1997.

The advantage of playing in their home city makes South Melbourne favourites to claim back-to-back titles, but only just.

Today's grand final - the sixth to be staged at Olympic Park in the last 10 seasons - has the makings of a classic. These two clubs have already met four times this season, and have yet to be separated by more than a goal.

Honours are probably even.

Sydney United overtook their arch rivals in the final round to claim the minor premiership, but South Melbourne exacted revenge in the two-legged major semi to secure home advantage for the grand final.

Certainly there is an edge to the contest. Not only have recent matches between these two clubs been close, but they have also been physical. With the

Ericsson Cup at stake, don't expect anybody to pull out of a tackle this afternoon.

At the end of perhaps the best finals series in the league's 22-year history, today's grand final promises to be a fitting finale.

Over the past four weeks there have been capacity crowds across the country, highlighted by the WACA Ground in Perth being soldout (with a total of 53,000 fans) in consecutive weeks.

The standard of football has risen to the occasion - in eight finals matches so far, the margin of victory has never extended beyond a single goal.

Indeed for those who claim the minor premiership should decide the championship - Pumas coach David Mitchell among the strongest advocates - the argument has been decisively lost.

Simply put, the public continues to vote with its feet. This year's finals have smashed previous attendance records.

And at a time when the standard of the league remains much-criticised, the players have responded to the big stage. The finals have been 50 percent quicker than matches during the regular season.

The grand final should be no exception. But what about the result?

South Melbourne's slight favouritism is not only based on the fact that the terraces will be dominated by their own fans. Coach Ange Postecoglou can call upon 11 survivors from last season's grand final, and big-match experience can never be underestimated.

By contrast, the Pumas have only four players who know what it's like to play in a grand final - three survivors from their 1997 defeat in Brisbane (Ante Moric, Richard Plesa and Velimir Kupresak), and fullback David Barrett, who won a championship with Sydney Olympic in 1990.

Add the fact that a host of Sydney United players are essentially in their first full season in the Ericsson Cup, then it's clear Mitchell has a big job preparing his team mentally for the pressures they will face today.

Not that it is beyond him.

The attacking trio of Mile Sterjovski, Joel Griffiths and Nathan Day (one to start on the bench) has amassed 32 goals already this season, so the firepower is clearly available. The distribution from the back of Richard Plesa and Velimir Kupresak provides the opportunities, as does the crossing of Barrett from the right.

Souths, of course, have plenty of their own offensive armoury. Michael Curcija and Vaughan Coveny have been dynamic all season, scoring 27 goals between them. Two players who started last season's grand final on the bench have a point to prove.

Super sub John Anastasiadis - the scorer of so many timely goals over the past two seasons - is waiting in the wings. Out wide Goran Lozanovski, if he plays, is a



Sydney's Joel Griffith tangles with South Melbourne veteran Jason Polak in the Major Semi Final clash at Edensor Park.

menace both with his crossing and his free kicks. On the opposite flank Fausto de Amicis has the ability to emulate him, but in previous games against the Pumas has been forced to adopt a more defensive role.

The likelihood, however, is that the grand final will be won or lost in midfield. In the engine room, there is nothing between the two sides.

The creativity is supplied by the likes of Walter Ardone (if fit) and the irrepressible Trimboli, while the industry is offered by David Clarkson, Jacob Burns, George Goutzioulis and Steve Berry. Who wins the battle for possession, and who can distribute the ball more effectively, will probably decide the destination of the Ericsson Cup.

By **MICHAEL COCKERILL**
The Sydney Morning Herald

CHAMPIONS TO PLAY THE WORLD

This season, the Ericsson Cup championship will mean more to the winner than just being Australian champions. The eventual winner will also take part in the inaugural FIFA Club World Challenge from the 5th -14th January, 2000 at a venue yet to be announced. Mexico, USA, Brazil, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey and Tahiti have all put their hand up to be the host city.

Eight clubs will be competing, comprising of one club from each of the confederations, one club from the host country and the winner of the Toyota Cup (Europe/South America Cup).

The Oceania Football Confederation qualifiers have been pencilled in for 22-31 October this year in Fiji, with a strong possibility that all 12 member nations will be represented by their club champion.

The nations that make up Oceania are American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Island's Tahiti, Tonga and Vanuatu.



The Pumas' Walter Ardone fights for the ball as South Melbourne's Con Blatsis towers over him.



South Melbourne's Michael Curcija feels the pressure as Sydney United's terrier-like Jacob Burns breaks clear.

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StarTips

Some of Australia's leading Soccer identities selections for today's game.

JOSIP SKOKO

(Socceroo, formerly with Melbourne Knights, currently with Hajduk Split, Croatian 1st Division)

Sydney United 2-1

They've fought hard all year and they'll keep it up through the grand final.

RAUL BLANCO

(Coach Olyroos, caretaker Coach Socceroos)

South Melbourne 100%

Experience will tell in the grand final, and South Melbourne have been there and done that. They have the players, the blend of experience and youth and it will see them through.

CHRISTIAN CARE

(Olyroo Midfielder, Marconi-Fairfield)

South Melbourne 2-0

Sydney United's luck is going to come to an end

GEORGE KULCSAR

(Socceroo, formerly with Marconi, currently with Queens Park Rangers in the English 1st Division)

South Melbourne 2-0

Only because I still know a few of the lads who play for Souths, and Trimmers and Jason Polak probably wouldn't talk to me again!

NICK RIZZO

(Olyroo Midfielder, formerly with Sydney Olympic, currently with Crystal Palace in the English 1st Division)

South Melbourne 2-0

South Melbourne are playing in Melbourne, and they've proven to be the best side in the League

STAN LAZARIDIS

(Socceroo, formerly with Adelaide Sharks, currently with West Ham in the English Premier League)

South Melbourne 2-1

I'm going for South Melbourne, purely on the fact that they've got a little more experience in this situation than Sydney United

NED ZELIC

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney Olympic, currently with 1860 Munich in the German Bundesliga)

Sydney United 1-0

Just a gut feeling I guess!

ANTE MILICIC

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney United, currently with NAC Breda in the Dutch 1st Division)

South Melbourne 2-1

My heart says Sydney United but South Melbourne are just too hard to beat in Melbourne, aren't they?



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Stan Lazaridis



Ned Zelic

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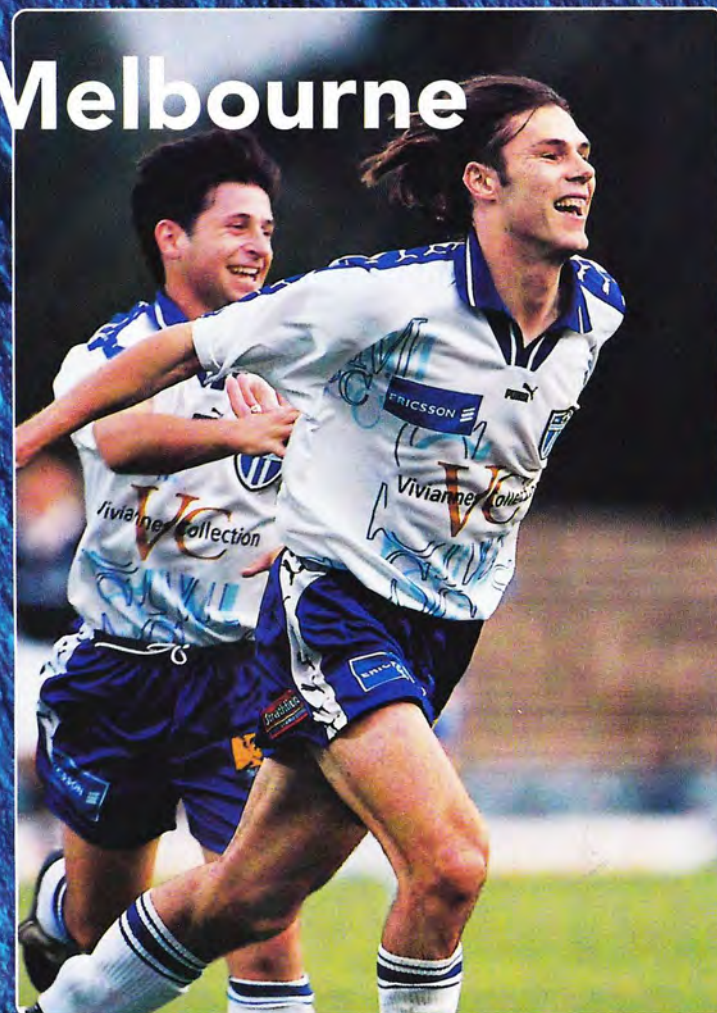
The South Melbourne File



Nick Orlic after scoring for South Melbourne at Olympic Park against Carlton.

Ericsson Cup 'Info Hotline'

1-900 123 035



South Melbourne, one of the few remaining clubs to have played in every season of the NSL competition, will attempt to become only the fourth club to clinch back-to-back Ericsson Cup championships, when they take on Minor Premiers Sydney United this afternoon.

The other double champions are Marconi Fairfield (1988-89) and Melbourne Knights (1994/5, 1995/6). Sydney City (1980-82) is the only club to have won a triple championship.

South's enjoyed 20 of the 30 weeks at the top of the 1998/99 standings, but that didn't stop Sydney United overhauling them in the final round of fixtures following a victory against Adelaide Sharks - while the Melbourne club had a bye. South Melbourne can boast the best defensive record of all top-six clubs for the season with only five defeats. Their goals

conceded (26), is also the league's best - together with Adelaide City. Some of their best results this season, are the 2-0 wins over Newcastle, Northern Spirit and Marconi and 3-1 victories against Sydney Olympic, Wollongong, Canberra and Melbourne Knights.

The club has won three championships (1984, 1990/91 and 1997/98) and runners-up in 1981, on top of four minor premierships. All in all, the club is arguably one of the most successful in the history of the competition. Captain Paul Trimboli, who without question has been a fine ambassador for both his club and the sport itself in Australia, again played a significant role in his side making the grand final. The 30-year old Socceroo midfielder is now only five matches away from the 350 game milestone, and four shy of reaching 100 Ericsson Cup career goals.



A Brief History THE SOUTH MELBOURNE STORY



South Melbourne captain Paul Trimboli holds aloft last year's Ericsson Cup.

The year 1959 saw the amalgamation of three strong Melbourne clubs - Hellenic, Yarra Park and South Melbourne United. Of these clubs it appears that South Melbourne United was the longest established, formed in the early 1930s.

In their first year of competition (1960) South Melbourne Hellas won the Victorian first division north championship - dropping only one competition point in the process, scoring 79 goals and conceding just 11. By 1962 Hellas had won the Victorian state league, a competition along with the NSW league considered the equal strongest in the nation. Perhaps Souths' most successful season before its national league status was in 1966 when one of Greece's best ever players, Con Nestorides, joined the club. Nestorides' immediate impact upon joining was to double the crowds and help secure the 1966 Victorian title. After winning their seventh State league title in 1976 the club then defeated fellow state league (NSW) champions St George 3-2 over two legs to take out the unofficial 1976 Australian club championship series. Along with St George and another 12 teams, Souths then bid farewell to regional competition and jetted off to join the newly established national league in 1977.

Despite big expectations, South Melbourne had a very mixed start to the national league. A low point in the club's national league existence was 1979. After a positive start to the season, Souths had all competition points deducted after round three when it was deemed that import Tony Turner had not been properly registered with the club. Three coaches, along with high profile Socceroos Jack Reilly, Jimmy Mackay and Jim Armstrong all left Souths that year, and the club finished the season in last position.

Recovery was soon achieved, and in 1984 the club finished on top of the table (southern division) table.

However in this year, a restructure of the Ericsson Cup meant that, for the first time, the minor premier was not the champion team. Souths had to win the finals series to be declared true champions of 1984. They powered through the southern division series, with victories over Melbourne Knights (3-2) and Heidelberg (4-2). With a grand final team featuring 19-year-old rookie Ange Postecoglou, South Melbourne won the 1984 grand final and championship by defeating Sydney Olympic over two legs - winning 2-1 in Sydney and 2-1 in Melbourne.

A grand final victory again ensued in the 1990/91 season when 23,318 gathered to watch probably the most enthralling national league grand final ever. Here Souths defeated Melbourne Knights - albeit on penalties - after two hours of intensive on-field action had resulted in a quite pulsating 2-2 draw. Interestingly the South Melbourne captain this day was Ange Postecoglou.

The infamous 'seven year itch' held and in 1998 Souths secured their third Ericsson Cup grand final win by getting on top of Carlton 2-1, with a dramatic winner scored by Con Boutsianis. The victorious coach was none other than Ange Postecoglou.

As at the end of the 1998/99 regular season, South Melbourne was leading the all-time Ericsson Cup competition table, with 292 wins and 147 draws from a total of 609 regular season games (with a for and against record of 962 goals to 703). Their record in all finals games is 17 wins and six draws from 36 games (56 goals scored to 50 conceded).

One of only three clubs to have played in all 23 seasons of the national league, Souths supporters are hungry and no less than another grand final victory in 1998/99 will do!

South Melbourne's Ericsson Cup record

Season	Position on ladder	Average home crowd	Finals record	Top scorer (goals)	Coaches
1977	11th / 14	5200	na	Peter Ollerton (6)	Manny Poulakakis, Con Xanthopoulos
1978	3rd / 14	7300	na	Duncan Cummings (9)	Dave MacLaren, Ted Smith
1979	14th / 14	5900	na	Alun Evans (6)	Dave MacLaren, Duncan McKay, John Margaritis
1980	3rd / 14	4700	na	Branko Buljevic (10)	John Margaritis
1981	2nd / 16	6300	na	Alun Evans (14)	John Margaritis
1982	6th / 16	3800	na	Charlie Egan (20)	John Margaritis, Tommy Docherty, Mick Watson
1983	4th / 16	4800	na	Doug Brown (16)	Rale Rasic, Len McKendry
1984^	1st* / 12	5200	won national grand final	Doug Brown (22)	Len McKendry
1985^	1st / 12	3500	lost southern division preliminary final		
1986^	7th / 12	3600	-	Charlie Egan (21)	Len McKendry
1987	6th / 13	2600	na	Danny Crainie (6)	John Margaritis
1988	3rd / 14	4600	lost minor semi final	Paul Wade (8)	Brian Garvey
1989	8th / 14	4100	-	Angie Postecoglou, Paul Trimboli (8)	Brian Garvey
1989/90	2nd / 14	4400	lost minor semi final	Paul Trimboli (10)	Brian Garvey
1990/91	2nd* / 14	5000	won grand final	Peter Tsolakis (13)	Ferenc Puskas
1991/92	3rd / 14	5300	lost preliminary final	Paul Trimboli, Kimon Taliadoros (9)	Ferenc Puskas
1992/93	1st / 14	5700	lost preliminary final	Kimon Taliadoros (15)	Ferenc Puskas
1993/94	2nd / 14	5400	lost preliminary final	Francis Awaritefe (19)	Jim Pyrgolios
1994/95	6th / 13	5000	lost preliminary final	Francis Awaritefe (11)	Jim Pyrgolios
1995/96	8th / 12	6200	-	Ivan Kelic (15)	Frank Arok
1996/97	3rd / 14	7400	lost preliminary final	Vaughan Coveny (9)	Frank Arok, Angie Postecoglou
1997/98	1st* / 14	6200	won grand final	Paul Trimboli (9)	Angie Postecoglou
1998/99	2nd / 15	8300	?	John Anastasiadis (12)	Angie Postecoglou
				Vaughan Coveny (14)	Angie Postecoglou

* NSL split into two conferences
^ grand final wins (champions)

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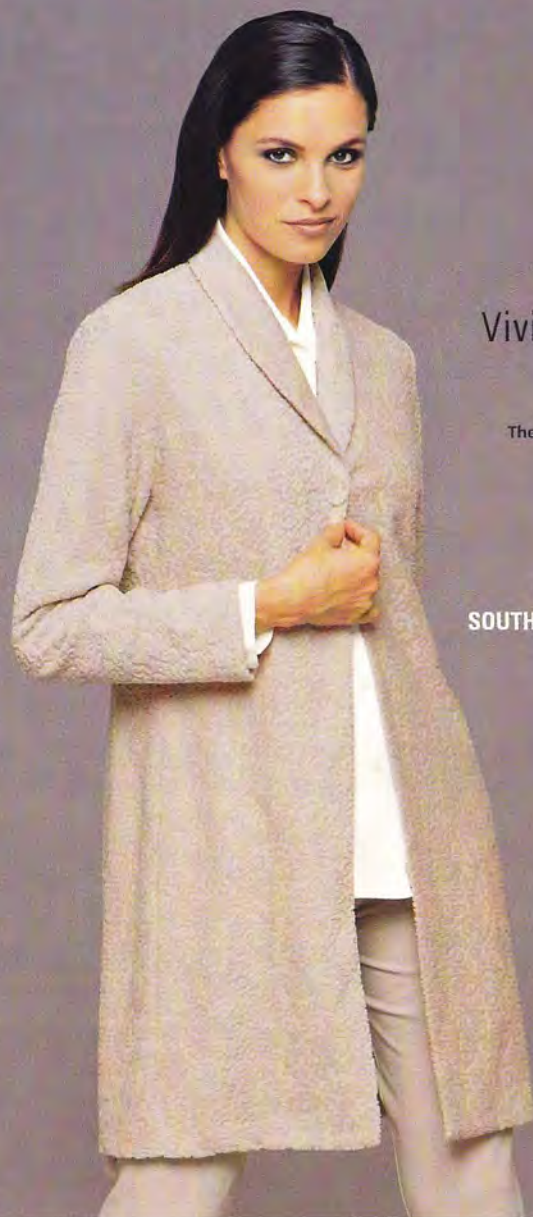
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Season Review

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR

After a slow start to the season, some pundits were starting to ask questions about the club's ability to make it back to back titles. Their form was indifferent to say the least and it was obvious they were feeling the pinch of the losing quality players like Bill Damianos (Greece) and Con Boutsianis (Perth) while an injury to David Clarkson did not help.

However, as champions so often do, Souths hit back and produced a golden run of form to win six matches in succession and climb to the top of the table.

While they continued to score goals, it was their superb defence which won wide acclaim, giving away just 26 goals in 28 games.

LOWLIGHT OF THE YEAR

There's no argument here. After taking the championship lead at the end of round 12, Souths seemingly had the minor premiership wrapped up. They held the lead for 18 weeks in succession and, at one stage, had got away to a seven point break from Sydney United, who had hit some problems. But, a combination of a magic run of form for the Sydneysiders and a couple of uncharacteristic slip ups from the Victorians saw the lead whittled to just two points come the final round. With South having the bye, United needed to beat struggling Adelaide Sharks at home, which they did, to claim the prize and shatter Souths hope of a double.

South Melbourne



PLAYER OF THE YEAR

A host of candidates and many memorable performances makes it difficult to pick a standout. Of course, the usual contenders came to the fore, including the irrepresible Paul Trimboli, who has established himself one of the greats of the Ericsson Cup.

Such is the esteem in which he is held that Trimmers has again been nominated for the Ericsson Cup Players player-of-the-year award. Another standout for Souths was Kiwi Vaughan Coveny, who enjoyed probably his best season in the League. He finished with 13 goals after the preliminary stage and was a thorn in the side of every defence with his speed.

DISCOVERY OF THE YEAR

Up and coming striker Michael Curcija produced a string of fine performances this season. Given his chance to maintain a regular spot in the star-studded line-up, the Young Socceroo did not let the opportunity slip past.

With 12 goals to his credit, Curcija finished in the top seven of the league, s leading scorers. There, s little doubt this talented goalscorer is destined for better things and it shouldn't be too long before he wins Socceroo selection. Of course, a career overseas is beckoning the youngster, though it would be great to see him have another season in Australia.

Ray Gatt
The Australian



South Melbourne Soccer Club season 1998/99.



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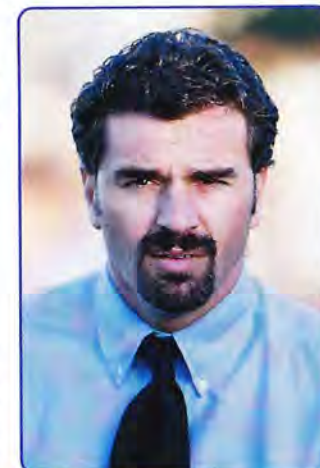
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South Melbourne Coach Ange Postecoglou

Making his way
to the top



Coach Profile

DOB:
27 August 1965

NSL Playing Career

South Melbourne:
1984-92/93
193 Appearances / 19 goals
Championship Winner:
1984, 1990/91

Coaching Career

South Melbourne:
1995/96 - 92 games
W53-D20-L19

Finals:
W07-D01-L01
Championship Winner
1997/98

While all the ravings have been for David Mitchell, Frank Farina and Eddie Krncevic, there is no question that if Soccer Australia goes for a local as our next National Coach, Ange Postecoglou outguns any of the new breed of Australian born coaches in terms of credentials. Postecoglou has an impressive playing record and at 33 has learned the ropes with six years of coaching at the top level behind him.

Postecoglou came through South Melbourne's junior ranks, was a senior player with South's Victorian State League side as a teenager, and progressed to the senior side in 1984 to be the youngest player in the squad which clinched South's first ever National League title.

He played for the Young Socceroos in the 1985 World Youth Championship finals in the USSR, then was extremely unlucky to claim just three internationals in the senior Australian national team.

He then skippered South Melbourne to its second National League title in 1991 before a cruel knee injury killed off his playing career prematurely at 27. He had great results in his first foray into club coaching with the Western Suburbs side in the Victorian League before South reclaimed its favourite son into the coaching ranks to become assistant to Frank Arok.

After three years as assistant, he stepped into the senior job - and coached South to win last season's Ericsson Cup title in only his second year in the hot seat. He is now on the verge of steering the club to its first ever back-to-back national championships.

PETER DESIRA
Herald Sun, Melbourne



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South Melbourne 1998/99 at a Glance

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	22
Date	Opponents	H/A	F-A	Att	M. Petkovic	S. Iosifidis	F. De Amicis	N. Orlic	C. Blatsis	D. Clarkson	S. Panopoulos	V. Coveny	P. Trimboli	M. Curcija	J. Anastasiadis	T. Baser	A. Cuzzupe	J. Polak	G. Lozanovski	G. Goutzoulis	J. Tsekinis	R. Liparoti	J. Tambouras	M. Mustafa
Sun 11 Oct	Gippsland Falcons	H	2-1	7,230	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼				
Sun 18	Adelaide Sharks	A	1-1	3,999	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼				
Sun 25	Newcastle Breakers	H	2-0	8,115	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼		▼	▼		▼	▼	▼		▼			
Sat 31	Marconi Fairfield	A	3-5	3,204	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼				▼		▼	▼		▼		▼	▼
Sun 8 Nov	Sydney Olympic	H	3-1	9,216	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼						▼		▼	▼	▼		▼
Sun 15	Perth Glory	A	1-2	18,067	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		
Sun 22	Carlton SC	H	4-4	11,200	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		
Sun 29	Melbourne Knights	A	1-0	6,411	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		
Sun 6 Dec	Wollongong Wolves	H	3-1	6,616	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		
Sun 13	Adelaide City	A	*1-1	3,491	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼		▼			
Sun 20	Northern Spirit	H	2-0	6,206	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼			
Sun 27	Brisbane Strikers	A	1-0	4,610	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼			
Sun 3 Jan	Sydney United	H	1-0	6,416	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼		▼		
Mon 11	Canberra Cosmos	A	3-1	2,940	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼		
Sun 17	Bye				▼	▼	▼	▼					▼	▼	▼									
Sat 23	Gippsland Falcons	A	4-1	3,121	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Tue 26	Adelaide Sharks	H	1-0	6,192	▼		▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			
Sun 31	Wollongong Wolves	A	*1-2	2,882	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼			▼		▼	▼	▼		
Sun 7 Feb	Melbourne Knights	H	3-1	8,496	▼	▼	▼		▼		▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼		▼	▼			▼
Fri 12	Newcastle Breakers	A	0-0	3,789	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼			▼	▼		
Sun 21	Marconi Fairfield	H	2-0	9,146	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼			▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 28	Sydney Olympic	A	1-1	6,485	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼		▼	▼	▼		
Sun 14 Mar	Carlton SC	A	3-0	7,971	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼		▼		
Sun 21	Adelaide City	H	1-1	8,169	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼
Fri 26	Northern Spirit	A	0-1	16,543	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼		▼	▼	▼		▼
Wed 31	Perth Glory	H	2-1	11,861	▼		▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼			
Sun 4 Apr	Brisbane Strikers	H	3-0	8,892	▼		▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼		▼		▼
Sun 11	Sydney United	A	0-1	4,321	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼		▼		
Sun 18	Canberra Cosmos	H	1-0	8,864	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼	▼	▼			
Sun 25	Bye				▼																			
Sun 9 May	Sydney United	H	2-1	10,691	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼				▼	▼	▼	▼		
Sun 16	Sydney United	A	0-0	11,579	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼			▼		▼	▼	▼		
	South Melbourne Appearances				104	72	87	86	71	75	127	113	323	89	52	62	7	106	39	44	26	25	1	8
	South Melbourne Goals				0	0	0	10	4	4	19	37	92	28	18	2	0	6	9	2	1	0	0	0
	Ericsson Cup Appearances				104	88	200	150	71	158	127	179	345	91	74	62	7	212	160	44	138	25	1	8
	Ericsson Cup Goals				0	0	4	13	4	14	19	56	96	28	18	2	0	18	17	2	28	0	0	0

▼ = Played ▽ = Sub Played ▼ = Yellow Card ▽ = Red Card ▼ = Goals Scored * = Own Goal

Paul Trimboli

In the spotlight



Paul Trimboli came through the junior ranks of Brighton soccer club in Victoria and was part of the golden era of Victorian junior soccer with the likes of Damian Mori and John Markovski that carried all before it in youth soccer. After a stint at the AIS, he launched himself into senior National League soccer with a season at Sunshine George Cross in 1987. The same year he played for the Young Socceroos side which made the finals of the World Youth Championship in Chile.

South Melbourne signed him the next season and he has since become an icon at the club - one of the rare breed who have totted up more than 300 National League appearances with one set-up. He made his senior Socceroo debut against Fiji in 1988 and was hailed by national coach Frank Arok as the new shining star for the international scene when he scored Australia's equaliser in the World Cup qualifier against Israel the following year. Most observers believe he hasn't been given enough chances in the senior Socceroos but, despite the limited opportunities he has 14 goals to his credit in 44 internationals which puts him in the top 12 in terms of overall top scorers for Australia at international level.

He was a member of South Melbourne's National League championship winning side in 1991 and added a second title when he captained the side to the Ericsson Cup grand final win over Carlton.

If the recognition hasn't come from the soccer fraternity, his fellow professionals certainly know a champion when they see one. Trimboli was voted Australian Under 21 player of the year twice - in 1988 and 1989 and in the top individual award - the Johnny Warren Medal - voted on by the players, he has emerged as Australian Players' Player of the Year on two occasions - in 1992-93 and 1997-98. He is now on the verge of guiding South Melbourne to its first ever back-to-back championships. And he is again amongst the nominations for player of the year.

Peter Desira
Herald Sun, Melbourne

The South Melbourne Squad

1



Michael Petrovic

Born: 16/7/76
Perth, Western Australia
Height: 188cm Weight: 80kg
Playing Position: Goalkeeper
Rep. Honours: Socceroos
Tremendous young but experienced goalkeeper, generally regarded as one of the top two or three keepers in the league. His height and agility allow him to command his six-yard box at crosses and corners.

2



Steve Iosifidis

Born: 28/12/73
Footscray, Victoria
Height: 184cm Weight: 75kg
Playing Position: Defender
Reliable defender who is nearing 100 Ericsson Cup games. He is now in his third season with the Lakers and was a member of their championship-winning side last season.

3



Fausto De Amicis

Born: 26/6/68
Victoria, Australia
Height: 170cm Weight: 65kg
Playing Position: Defender
Rep. Honours: Socceroos
Very quick defensive midfielder who has tremendous fighting qualities and never stops running until the final whistle. Has vast experience having played over 200 Ericsson Cup matches.

4



Nick Orlie

Born: 6/8/70 Sydney, NSW
Height: 188cm Weight: 90kg
Playing Position: Defender
Tall, strong central defender who will make life very tough for Sydney United's Mile Sterjovski and company. Another player with plenty of finals experience. Orlie was part of South Melbourne's success last season.

5



Con Blatsis

Born: 6/7/77 Australia
Height: 192cm Weight: 80kg
Playing Position: Defender
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Olyroos (U/23)
Tall, strong, tough and uncompromising, with no shortage of skill - that just about sums up Con Blatsis. Anyone playing against the big defender will certainly know they've been in a game of soccer.

6



David Clarkson

Born: 1/2/68
Preston, England
Height: 176cm Weight: 70kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Tenacious and tireless midfielder who'll run all day and always gives 110%. His value to South Melbourne was underlined when he won the club's best and fairest award in their championship season last year.

7



Steve Panopoulos

Born: 23/6/75
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 169cm Weight: 68kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Young but very experienced midfielder who has been at South Melbourne since he was a teenager and has now played well over 100 Ericsson Cup games for the reigning champions. Small in stature but an important player for the Lakers.

8



Vaughan Coveny

Born: 13/12/71
Wellington, New Zealand
Height: 185cm Weight: 84kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: New Zealand All Whites
Tall New Zealand international who's had a terrific year, particularly in front of goal. Extremely strong in the air and dangerous at set-pieces, he finished the regular season with thirteen goals to be the league's fifth top scorer.

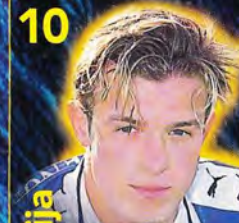
9



Paul Trimboli

Born: 25/2/69
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 173cm Weight: 72kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17), Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Socceroos
Arguably Australia's most gifted player in the past 20 years not to have played overseas, Trimboli has tremendous vision, bundles of skill and is a superb finisher. He's the man that presses the buttons for South Melbourne and is the obvious danger man.

10



Michael Curcija

Born: 27/6/77
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 183cm Weight: 80kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Olyroos (U/23)
Another of the Lakers' young guns who's had a great year, recently representing Australia at the World Youth Cup in Nigeria. Has pace and with twelve goals in the regular season has shown he is an excellent finisher.

11



John Anastasiadis

Born: 13/8/68
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 179cm Weight: 78kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
Veteran striker who has played in Greece but is now in the twilight of his career. Not as quick as he once was but knows where the goals are and will punish defences if given the chance.

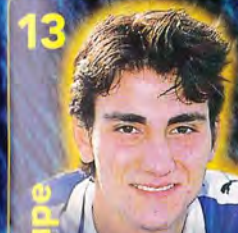
12



Tansel Baser

Born: 17/4/76
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 190cm Weight: 79kg
Playing Position: Defender
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Olyroos (U/23)
Tall and slender defender who has been at South Melbourne for four years but incredibly didn't start playing soccer until he was fourteen. Has previously had trials with top Turkish side Trabzemspaz.

13



Adrian Cuzzupe

Born: 6/8/80
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 178cm Weight: 72kg
Playing Position: Defender
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17), Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
Skilful young midfielder who's in his first season with South Melbourne. Looks to have a great future ahead of him and has already represented Australia at U/17 and U/20 level.

14



Jason Polak

Born: 9/1/68 Australia
Height: 178cm Weight: 80kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Socceroos
Former Socceroo midfielder who is another of South Melbourne's very experienced players. Not a noted goalscorer with only a dozen goals in more than 200 appearances but a very useful player to have on the bench.

15



Goran Lozanovski

Born: 11/1/74
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 180cm Weight: 88kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Olyroos (U/23), Socceroos
Highly talented midfielder who has had a fantastic season. Very fast and dangerous when running at defences. Next to Con Boutistis, is the best dead-ball exponent in the Ericsson Cup and is also one of the best crossers in the league.

16



George Goutzioulis

Born: 18/1/78
Victoria, Australia
Height: 180cm Weight: 74kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Another of South Melbourne's talented young local players to impress at Ericsson Cup level. Goutzioulis is currently in his third season after coming through the Lakers' junior ranks and has become a vital part of the Laker's midfield.

17



Jim Tsekinis

Born: 8/5/75
Adelaide, South Australia
Height: 177cm Weight: 77kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
Strong and skilful striker who has mainly come off the South Melbourne bench this season but is very dangerous around the goals.

18



Robert Liparoti

Born: 2/4/78
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 193cm Weight: 89kg
Playing Position: Defender
Towering young centre back whose opportunities have been limited in his three seasons at South Melbourne due to the Laker's outstanding defence but has a very promising future.

22



Mustafa Mustafa

Born: 22/8/79
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 178cm Weight: 69kg
Playing Position: Striker
Another young player in his first season at South Melbourne, having previously been with the Victorian Institute of Sport. Mustafa's appearances this season have been restricted to eight games as a substitute.





Focus on...

Michael Curcija



FULL NAME: Michael Curcija
 NICKNAME: Cij
 CITY AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH: Melbourne, Victoria
 DATE OF BIRTH: 27th June 1977
 AGE: 21
 STAR SIGN: Cancer
 OCCUPATION: Professional Soccer Player
 MARRIED: No
 CHILDREN: No
 PETS: No
 LEFT OR RIGHT FOOTED: Right
 NATIONAL LEAGUE APPEARANCES: 60
 NATIONAL REP HONOURS:
 Australian under 20, Olyroos under 23
 CLUBS PLAYED FOR:
 AIS, Heidelberg, Bulleen, Rosanna
 BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE:
 Representing Australia
 AMBITIONS:
 To play in Sydney Olympics and overseas
 CHILDHOOD TEAM:
 Rosanna, Bulleen, and Heidelberg
 MOST ADMIRER PLAYER: Paul Trimboli
 BIGGEST INFLUENCE: Father & Family
 FAVOURITE FILM: Godfather II
 FAVOURITE ACTOR: Robert De Niro
 FAVOURITE ACTRESS: Jennifer Aniston
 BEST BAND/SINGER: Pearl Jam
 FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME: WCW Wrestling
 FAVOURITE CARTOON: Simpsons
 FAVOURITE NON-FOOTBALL SPORTS STAR:
 Michael Schumacher
 FUNNIEST TEAMMATE: Fausto De Amicis
 FAVOURITE BRAND OF CLOTHING: Ralph Lauren
 GOAL YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE BEFORE YOU
 RETIRE: To have enough money to retire
 WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION:
 My Legs
 DREAM CHOICE OF WHICH WORLD LEAGUE:
 Spain



Focus on...

David Clarkson



FULL NAME: David Clarkson
 NICKNAME: Clarky
 CITY AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH: Preston, U.K.
 DATE OF BIRTH: 1st February 1968
 AGE: 31
 STAR SIGN: Aquarius
 OCCUPATION: Soccer Player / Coach
 MARRIED: No - Girlfriend, Dani
 CHILDREN: Elodie (6), Brooke (4)
 PETS: One dog, two cats
 LEFT OR RIGHT FOOTED: Right
 NATIONAL LEAGUE APPEARANCES: 150
 NATIONAL REP HONOURS: No
 CLUBS PLAYED FOR: South China, Brighton U.K.
 BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE:
 Championship with South Melbourne, AIS 86 87
 AMBITIONS: Back to Back Championships
 CHILDHOOD TEAM:
 South Hobart, Hobart Juventus, AIS
 MOST ADMIRER PLAYER: Paul Trimboli
 BIGGEST INFLUENCE:
 Too Many to mention - Girlfriend Dani
 FAVOURITE FILM: Titanic
 FAVOURITE ACTOR: Lots
 FAVOURITE ACTRESS: Lots
 BEST BAND/SINGER:
 Crowded House, Hunters & Collectors
 FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME: English Soccer
 FAVOURITE CARTOON: Fog Horn, Leg Horn
 FAVOURITE NON-FOOTBALL SPORTS STAR:
 Pat Rafter, Michael Jordan
 FUNNIEST TEAMMATE: Steven Isifodias
 FAVOURITE BRAND OF CLOTHING:
 Puma, Calvin Klein
 GOAL YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE BEFORE YOU'RE
 RETIRE: Play for Australia
 WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION:
 My girlfriend and my kids
 DREAM CHOICE OF WHICH WORLD LEAGUE:
 Spain or England



Focus on...

Michael Petkovic



FULL NAME: Michael Petkovic
 NICKNAME: Petka
 CITY AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH: Perth, Western Australia
 DATE OF BIRTH: 16th July 1976
 AGE: 23
 STAR SIGN: Cancer
 OCCUPATION: Soccer Player
 MARRIED: Yes
 CHILDREN: Teaghan (4)
 PETS: No
 LEFT OR RIGHT FOOTED: Left
 NATIONAL LEAGUE APPEARANCES: 71
 NATIONAL REP HONOURS: Yes
 CLUBS PLAYED FOR: Spearwood Dalmatinac
 CHILDHOOD TEAM: Spearwood Dalmatinac
 MOST ADMIRER PLAYER: Paul Trimboli
 BIGGEST INFLUENCE: Family & Friends
 FAVOURITE FILM: Perfect Murder
 FAVOURITE ACTOR: Jim Carey
 FAVOURITE ACTRESS: Gwyneth Paltrow
 BEST BAND/SINGER: Aerosmith
 FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME: Seinfeld
 FAVOURITE CARTOON: SouthPark
 FUNNIEST TEAMMATE: Steven Iosifidis
 FAVOURITE BRAND OF CLOTHING: Polo
 GOAL YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE BEFORE YOU RETIRE: Play for Australia and overseas
 WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION: Teaghan
 DREAM CHOICE OF WHICH WORLD LEAGUE: England

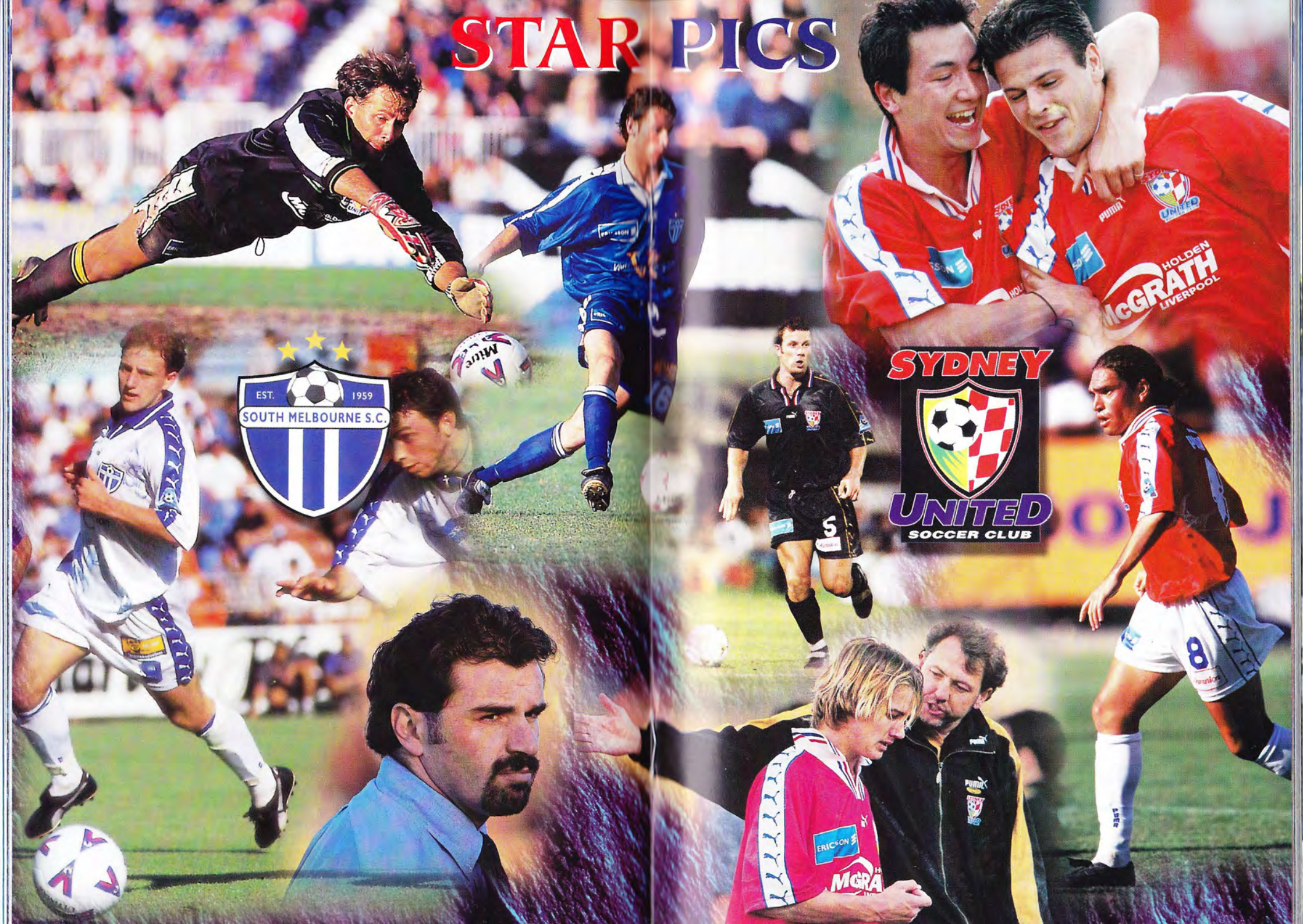
Ten things you (probably) didn't know about South Melbourne

1. After winning three consecutive Victorian State League titles between 1964 and 1966, Souths splashed out on imports. Ten players were brought out from Greece in 1968, but by season's end all 10 had returned home. In 1969 there were five more Greek players imported - yet again all returning by the completion of the season.
2. The only Souths coach to have a 100 per cent success rate in the Ericsson Cup was Ted Smith, who had played for Australia in the 1956 Olympic Games. Smith took the reigns at Souths for one game in 1978, when regular coach Dave MacLaren was ill. The team won 4-0 over Footscray.
3. In 1979 and 1980 Souths purchased Alan Davidson and Steve Blair respectively for a mere \$1000 each. Between them, the pair ended up playing 508 Ericsson Cup games for the club - which calculates to an initial investment of \$3.94 per game.
4. The only Ericsson Cup game that was abandoned and later replayed was when South Melbourne travelled to Bruce Stadium to play Canberra City on March 21, 1984. A severe and prolonged storm stopped play in the 82nd minute, with Souths ahead 3-2. The replay, played five days later, was won by Canberra 3-1.
5. Between round 1 of the 1983 Ericsson Cup season, and round 15 of 1988, defender Bobby Russell did not miss an Ericsson Cup match for South Melbourne - a streak of 147 consecutive games for the club. If we add the 67 consecutive matches Russell played for Adelaide City (1980-82) immediately before joining Souths, it adds up to an Ericsson Cup record of 214 consecutive appearances for Russell.
6. The magical Magyar Ferenc Puskas coached Souths in seasons 1989/90 to 1991/92. Puskas is one of the all-time legends of the world game, and is frequently mentioned in soccer experts' all-time best teams. He was the captain of Hungary which went through 29 games undefeated in the early 1950s, and won the 1952 Gold Medal at the Helsinki Olympic Games.
7. Amongst other coaching appointments, Puskas coached Saudi Arabia for two years in the early 1970s. Other former South Melbourne coaches who have also coached national teams are Lou Brocic (1969-71 coach of Souths and later coach of Kuwait), Tom Docherty (1982 with Souths, previously in charge of Scotland for one year), Rale Rasic (1983 Souths, four years with Socceroos) and Frank Arok (1994-96 Souths, five years with Socceroos).
8. An own goal by Wollongong's George Souris in Souths' 1-2 loss to the Wolves in round 18 1998/99 was South Melbourne's 1000th goal in the Ericsson Cup.
9. Paul Trimboli (pictured) has played in front of 1,847,700 spectators in his 345 game Ericsson Cup career, up to but not including the 1998/99 grand final. This is easily a record for an Ericsson Cup player - with an aggregate audience over 100,000 more than the next most popular player (Alex Tobin, 1,739,300 spectators).
10. The Papasavas medal, awarded to the Ericsson Cup's under 21 player of the season, is named after South Melbourne's longest serving president the late Sam Papasavas. A person who held prominent positions with both the Victorian and Australian Soccer Federations, Papasavas was one of the chief players in the formation of the Ericsson Cup in 1977. His strong commitment to youth development was acknowledged by the naming of the national under 21 player award.

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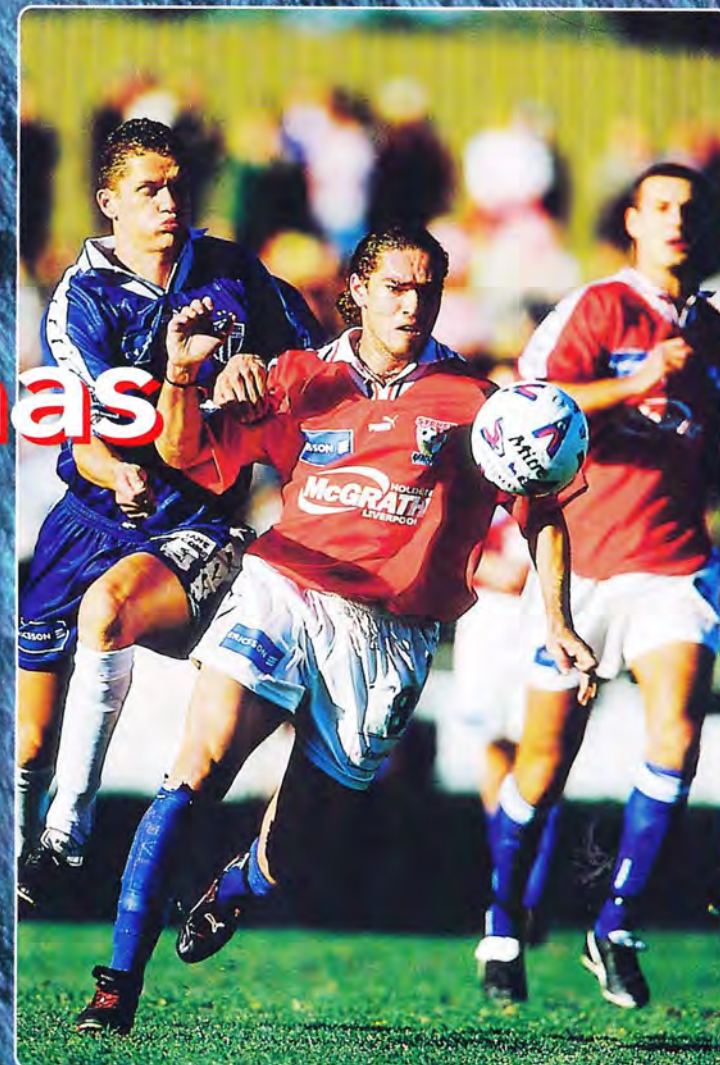


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The Pumas FILE



Pumas' Walter Ardone shields the ball from Vaughan Coveny during last week's clash.

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Could this be third time lucky for the Pumas after being on the losing end of two grand finals in 1988 and 1996/97? Apart from their fans of course, there weren't too many pundits predicting Sydney United would be minor premiers this season, yet coach David Mitchell was able to demonstrate his mostly young charges had more than enough ability to overhaul the defending champions South Melbourne. Particularly when their two primary strikers Mile Sterjovski and Joel Goffals were absent for four games owing to Youth International duty at Nigeria 99.

United's Won 18, Drawn 4 and Lost 6 statistics came about following some good results against

Sydney Olympic (4-1), Gippsland (4-0), Brisbane (4-3) and a 1-0 victory over South Melbourne in Round 28 which inevitably gave United the minor premiership.

The Pumas missed out on a Sydney grand final after losing 1-2 on aggregate to South Melbourne during the two-leg Major semi-final stage. They rebounded with a vengeance last week in the Preliminary Final with a well-deserved 2-1 triumph over Perth Glory at Marconi Stadium. Despite an attempt by a handful of their supporters to wreck the party, United more than indicated they are capable of relieving the Melbourne club of the prized trophy this afternoon.

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A Brief History THE SYDNEY UNITED STORY

Sydney Croatia sports club emerged in 1957 and began competing as a soccer team one year later. Like lots of other football clubs which emerged at that time, Croatia were formed to provide a haven for Croatian migrants who had chosen to make Australia their new home.

But the Croatia Soccer Club soon became much more than just a social establishment. After joining the NSW first division in 1963, the team was one soon highly revered by opponents, with a squad containing many imported players from all over Europe and South America. Yet Croatia was also developing a strong youth team structure – one that eventually reaped many rewards.

Often drawing crowds around the 10,000 mark, Croatia won the NSW championship in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981 and 1982. The natural step was to join the national league, which they did in 1984. They have stayed there ever since.

Large home crowds in their early national league days ensured that Croatia soon became the most popular club in Sydney. The club reached the Ericsson Cup finals in 1985 and 1986, and in 1987 they won the national knock-out cup, defeating South Melbourne 2-0 on aggregate over two legs.

In 1988 Sydney Croatia reached their first Ericsson Cup grand final. A goal each from Alan Hunter and Manis Lamond led the team to a 2-2 draw against Marconi, however Croatia ended up on the wrong end of a 3-2 penalty shoot-out, giving the title to Marconi. Croatia's 1988 team was one chock full of Socceroos, including Tony Franken, Craig Foster, Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater.

Renamed Sydney United in 1993, the club next reached the Ericsson Cup finals in 1993/94, and has been a finals regular ever since. After winning the minor premiership in season 1996/97, they made their second Ericsson Cup grand final, only to lose 0-2 away to the Brisbane Strikers, in front of the Ericsson Cup's largest ever crowd (40,446).

Sydney United's Ericsson Cup record

Season	Position on ladder	Average home crowd	Finals record	Top scorer (goals)	Coaches
1984^	6th / 12	4100	-	Graham Arnold (11)	Atti Abonyi, Mick Jones, Bruno Vidaic, Harry Noon, Vedran Rozic
1985^	2nd / 12	5500	lost northern division preliminary final	Jim Patikas (17)	Vedran Rozic
1986^	1st / 12	6000	lost northern division preliminary final	Graham Arnold (17)	Vedran Rozic
1987	5th / 13	6300	na	Robbie Slater (9)	Vedran Rozic
1988	2nd / 14	4700	lost grand final	Graham Arnold, Manis Lamond (10)	Vedran Rozic
1989	7th / 14	3700	-	Graham Arnold (5)	Vedran Rozic, Ron Corry
1989/90	7th / 14	3700	-	David Seal (15)	Ron Corry, Graham Arnold, Tony Vrzina
1990/91	7th / 14	3500	-	Tony Krslovic (12)	Tony Vrzina, Mick Watson, Mladin Vrankovic
1991/92	12th / 14	2600	-	Tony Krslovic (7)	Mladin Vrankovic, Ivan Raznjevic
1992/93	7th / 14	2400	-	Tony Krslovic (10)	Manfred Schaefer
1993/94	3rd / 14	3800	lost elimination final	Manis Lamond, Ante Milicic (7)	Manfred Schaefer
1994/95	3rd / 13	3900	lost minor semi final	Manis Lamond, Ante Milicic, David Zdrilic (7)	Branko Culina
1995/96	6th / 12	4300	lost minor semi final	David Zdrilic (10)	Branko Culina
1996/97	1st / 14	6200	lost grand final	David Zdrilic (21)	Branko Culina
1997/98	4th / 14	3600	lost elimination final	Abbas Saad (10)	David Mitchell
1998/99	1st / 15	4200	?	Mile Sterjovski (16)	David Mitchell

^ NSL split into two conferences

Previous meetings

In Melbourne
In Sydney

Regular season games

1987: 1-1; Sydney Utd 2-0
1988: Sth Melb 1-0; Sth Melb 3-1
1989: Sydney Utd 1-0; Sydney Utd 2-1
89/90: Sth Melb 4-0; Sydney Utd 3-1
90/91: Sydney Utd 2-1; 0-0
91/92: 0-0; Sth Melb 2-0
92/93: Sth Melb 2-1; Sth Melb 5-2
93/94: Sth Melb 2-1; Sydney Utd 1-0
94/95: Sydney Utd 1-0; Sydney Utd 2-1
95/96: 2-1, 2-0 both Sydney Utd; Sydney Utd 4-1
96/97: Sydney Utd 3-1; Sydney Utd 2-0
97/98: Sth Melb 3-0; 2-2
98/99: Sth Melb 1-0; Sydney Utd 1-0

Finals games

1988: Sydney Utd 2-1
94/95: Sth Melb 3-1
96/97: Sydney Utd 1-0
98/99: Sth Melb 2-1, 0-0



Sydney United's Jacob Burns and skipper Velimir Kupresak delighted after their Preliminary Final victory over Perth Glory.

Only four of the starting XI of United's 1996/97 grand final team stayed with the club in 1997/98. Despite this mass exodus, including a change of coach, United were still able to finish fourth in 97/98. And this season, coach David Mitchell has led the club to its third minor premiership, a stunning effort considering the player turnaround of recent years. A feature of season 98/99 was the club's excellent record at home, with only one loss - 3-4 to Perth Glory.

The club has continued to be an important breeding ground for the national team. Experienced

Socceroos Mark Bosnich, Zeljko Kalac and Tony Popovic, and the newer breed of Mark Babic, David Zdrilic, Ante Milicic and Paul Bilokapic all learned their trade through the Sydney United youth ranks. In terms of the development of such high class players, no one club has contributed as much to the success of the Australian national team over the past 15 years as Sydney United. And for this they must be acknowledged. There is no doubt many of the essentially young United brigade on display today will be Socceroos of the future.

Andrew Howe



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Season Review

SEASON HIGHLIGHT

Where do you start in what was a wonderful season for the Pumas on the field? Obviously, winning the minor premiership is upper-most in David Mitchell's mind.

Being first past the post is usually indicative of the strengths and weaknesses of a club. The Pumas put together seven wins and a draw in their last eight matches to snatch the minor premiership from South Melbourne in the last round.

The way the club battled in the face of adversity especially in regards to their well-documented financial problems, which almost saw them kicked out of the competition mid-season, was another feather in their cap.

Everyone associated with the club will long remember the sacrifices the players, coaching staff and officials made to keep the Pumas afloat in their troubled times.

SEASON LOWLIGHT

No question about it, the financial disaster which almost saw the end of this proud club. A lesser club would have thrown up their hands and surrendered meekly.

It was also difficult at the start of the season when coach Mitchell had to contend with losing a host of quality players, forcing him to rebuild the squad. This led to a slow start to the season.

Some disturbing crowd problems also came back

Sydney United



to haunt the club, especially after the Preliminary Final win over Perth Glory.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Any one of the squad would be a worthy winner for the sheer fact that they all played for each other and pulled together when times got tough. Young strikers Mile Sterjovski (NSL goalscorer of the year) and Joel Griffiths proved to be a dynamic pairing up front, causing all sorts of problems for opposition defences. Midfielder Jacob Burns had his best, while sweeper Richard Plesa was outstanding. Then there was the 'old man' of the team, Vel Kupresak who was simply super. And in a photo finish, the winner is...Sterjovski, narrowly ahead of Kupresak.

DISCOVERY OF THE YEAR

Two contenders...Griffiths and the human sprinting machine, Danny Townsend who was plucked from the relative obscurity of the NSW State League but impressed with his speed and toughness. Griffiths had a wonderful debut season, culminating in his selection for the Young Socceroos squad for the World Youth Cup in Nigeria. Lightly framed Griffiths looked like he would be broken in two by some of the more rugged Ericsson Cup defenders, but he never took a step back and always bounced straight up when hit. A real poacher, he scored eight goals and is in line for the Ericsson Cup rookie-of-the-year - and he would be a worthy winner too.

Ray Gatt
The Australian

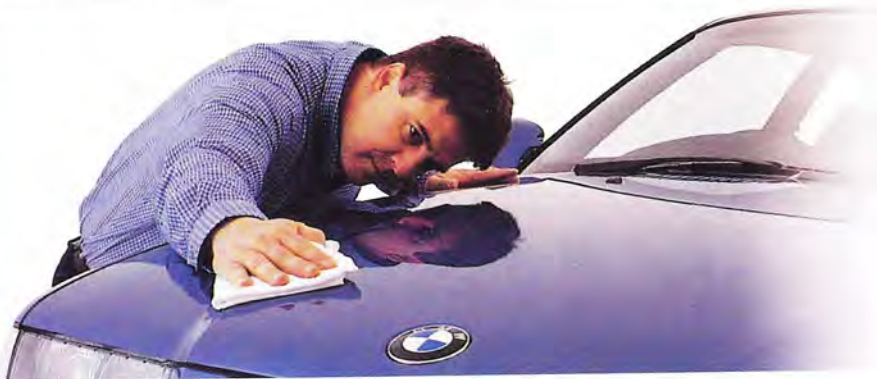


Sydney United Soccer Club season 1998/99.

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Sheer Driving Pleasure

Pumas Coach David Mitchell

A new breed in the NSL

Coach Profile

Born: 13.6.62 - Scotland
Moved to Australia aged 7

Senior Playing Career:

Ericsson Cup: Adelaide City 80,81,82,84
Sydney City 82,83,85
Sydney Olympic 96/97
Sydney United 97/98, 98/99

Overseas: Glasgow Rangers (Scotland)

Eintracht Frankfurt (Germany)
Feyenoord (Holland)
Chelsea (England)
Newcastle (England)
Swindon (England)
Izmir (Turkey)
Millwall (England)
Selangor (Malaysia)

Coaching Career:

96/97 Olympic - 10 matches
97/98 Sydney United
28 matches
98/99 Sydney United
31 matches so far
as at 20/5/99

David Mitchell was one of the few people who thought at the beginning of the season that Sydney United would be a force in this year's Ericsson Cup.

No one gave the team a chance but after 33 weeks, Mitchell has steered the Pumas into the grand final with a continuous display of faith which inspired his small squad of 17.

Not for him the stand-off coach who shouts instructions for the side at training or scribbles magic formulas on a blackboard.

David Mitchell is passionate yet polite, praises and supports his players, credits his opposition and even referees have a good word for him.

Football coaches are reputed to be tough and mean and everyone knows nice guys don't win matches but the new breed of Mitchell has once again proved the critics wrong.

He has been a winner with Glasgow Rangers in the 1984 Scottish Cup, England's Division One with Swindon, the league and Cup double in Malaysia with Selangor.

Add his playing experience with Sydney City and various overseas teams after his Ericsson Cup debut in 1981 for Adelaide City and 45 appearances for Australia - what more was left except to be a successful coach.

"I'm not kidding myself about winning the minor premiership and the preliminary final. All that did was put us into the grand final," said the down-to-earth Mitchell who is one of four finalists for national Coach of the Year. The other three are Graham Arnold (Northern Spirit), Ange Postecoglou (South Melbourne) and Bernd Stange (Perth Glory).

Don't bet against Mitchell taking out a remarkable double. Sydney United, with its history of international players, has another chance to complete that one final step to becoming national champion.

In their 16 seasons in the Ericsson Cup, the Pumas have finished 10 times in the top six and have been beaten in two grand finals. A Tony Henderson penalty for Marconi deprived them of the 1988 title and Frank Farina's Brisbane Strikers stopped them in season 1996/97.

Can the David Mitchell youth charge, bolstered by a small group of veterans, finally achieve the one prize which has eluded the club. Will third time be lucky for the Pumas?

Ted Simmons

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Sydney United 1998/99 at a Glance

Date	Opponents	H/A	F-A	Att	A. Crews	D. Barrett	V. Kupresak	R. Plesa	J. Vrkic	J. Burns	W. Ardone	M. Sterjovski	N. Day	S. Berry	J. Moric	J. Caleta	D. Townsend	M. Santalab	D. Mitchell	J. Griffiths	S. Eagleton	A. Saad	A. Moric	D. Kukocka	P. Bennett	M. Gibson
Sun 11 Oct	Newcastle Breakers	H	1-1	6,221	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sat 17	Marconi Fairfield	A	0-2	8,752	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 25	Sydney Olympic	H	4-1	5,172	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 1 Nov	Perth Glory	A	1-3	16,738	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 8	Carlton SC	H	2-1	3,116	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 15	Melbourne Knights	A	1-0	3,548	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 22	Wollongong Wolves	H	2-1	4,026	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 29	Adelaide City	A	2-3	2,300	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 6 Dec	Northern Spirit	H	1-0	6,236	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sat 12	Brisbane Strikers	A	2-2	4,305	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 20	Bye																									
Sun 27	Canberra Cosmos	H	2-0	3,268	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 3 Jan	South Melbourne	A	0-1	6,416	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 10	Gippsland Falcons	H	4-0	2,635	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 17	Adelaide Sharks	A	2-1	2,316	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Fri 22	Newcastle Breakers	A	1-0	3,697	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Tue 26	Marconi Fairfield	H	3-2	6,498	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Fri 29	Northern Spirit	A	2-1	17,024	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 7 Feb	Adelaide City	H	1-1	4,018	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 14	Sydney Olympic	A	1-2	5,107	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 21	Perth Glory	H	3-4	4,211	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 28	Carlton SC	A	3-1	3,144	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 7 Mar	Melbourne Knights	H	2-1	2,118	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 14	Wollongong Wolves	A	1-0	3,528	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 21	Brisbane Strikers	H	4-3	3,327	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sat 27	Bye																									
Mon 5 Apr	Canberra Cosmos	A	4-1	2,111	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 11	South Melbourne	H	1-0	4,321	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 18	Gippsland Falcons	A	0-0	2,013	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 25	Adelaide Sharks	H	3-1	8,142	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 9 May	South Melbourne	A	1-2	10,691	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 16	South Melbourne	H	0-0	11,579	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sun 23	Perth Glory	H	2-1	7,698	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Sydney United Appearances					34	46	226	78	62	56	26	36	19	29	5	60	25	25	24	27	3	27	111	2	54	14
Sydney United Goals					0	3	12	4	2	5	4	19	7	3	0	8	2	2	6	8	1	10	9	0	2	0
Ericsson Cup Appearances					34	305	226	78	82	56	127	36	86	29	5	178	25	25	108	27	15	175	131	2	101	274
Ericsson Cup Goals					0	12	12	4	2	5	13	19	16	3	0	31	2	2	33	8	1	54	12	0	3	1

▼ = Played ▼ = Sub Played ▼ = Yellow Card ▼ = Red Card ▼ = Goals Scored

Velimir Kupresak

Setting the example

High above the attack rose the recognisable head of Velimir Kupresak doing what he does best - stopping the opposition.

The Sydney United fans left little doubt on their feelings for Kupresak when they voted him as their all-time favourite player.

Spending his 10th season with the club and his first as club captain, the long serving defender has had another outstanding season with his skills, dogged defence and distribution. But statistics such as being right-footed, 35 years old, and 12 games behind the club record of 238 held by Manis Lamond (1986-96) only tell part of the story.

Kupresak started playing soccer at the age of five in Croatia where he learned his trade before coming to Australia.

As a stopper, he has been a tower of strength to the younger players in the Pumas and is rarely beaten in the air.

He may not be the fastest player on the field but his anticipation and reading of the game usually find him in position to block out the opposition.

This has been his sixth finals series since joining United in 1989 and it will be his second grand final.

His ambition is to be a coach where he will undoubtedly apply the same principle which has guided him through his playing career... "work hard and never give up".

Ted Simmons



The Sydney United Squad

1
Andrew Crews



Born: 18/8/73 Sydney, NSW
Height: 193cm Weight: 77kg
Playing Position: Goalkeeper
Very tall, promising young goalkeeper who was the club's number one keeper at the start of the season but after playing the first seventeen matches has been sidelined with injury.

2
David Barrett



Born: 21/2/69 Sydney, NSW
Height: 186cm Weight: 85kg
Playing Position: Sweeper
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17)
Veteran defender with over 300 Ericsson Cup games to his credit. Tough and uncompromising, Barrett has already tasted Ericsson Cup success as a member of Sydney Olympic's championship-winning side in 1990.

4
Velimir Kupresak



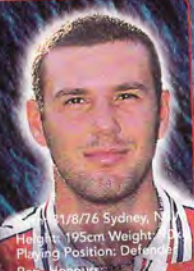
Born: 1/9/63
Laslovo, Croatia
Height: 183cm Weight: 87kg
Playing Position: Defender
Now in his tenth season with the Pumas, the loyal, Croatian-born defender may not be the quickest around, but his determination and know-how make him one of the league's toughest defenders.

5
Richard Plesa



Born: 8/1/76 Sydney, NSW
Height: 186cm Weight: 78kg
Playing Position: Sweeper
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
One of the few Sydney United players still with the club who were part of the losing side in the 1997 Ericsson Cup final. Fast establishing himself as a top-quality defender, he's also dangerous shooting from distance.

6
Joe Vrkic



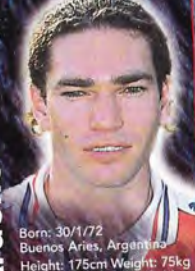
Born: 11/8/76 Sydney, NSW
Height: 195cm Weight: 85kg
Playing Position: Defender
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
Giant young defender who has been an important part of Sydney United's strong defensive unit this season. His height makes him very dangerous at set-pieces and he was part of Australia's 1995 World Youth Cup campaign.

7
Jacob Burns



Born: 21/4/78 Sydney, NSW
Height: 178cm Weight: 77kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Olyroo
Skilful and gritty midfielder who never stops running and never gives less than 110%. His determination and aggression in midfield together with his distribution make him one of the big danger players for the Glory.

8
Walter Ardone



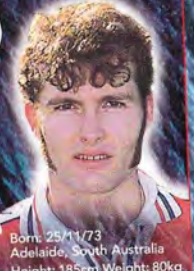
Born: 30/1/72
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Height: 175cm Weight: 75kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Socceroos
Talented former Socceroo in his first season with the Pumas, after playing for three other Ericsson Cup clubs and also overseas. Has great vision and can split open a defence with one brilliant pass.

9
Mile Sterjovski



Born: 27/5/79
Wellington, NSW
Height: 180cm Weight: 78kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Olyroos (U/23)
Very exciting young striker with all the attributes to go a long way in soccer. He's strong, very quick and finishes well with head or foot. Will need to be marked extremely closely by whoever gets the job on him.

10
Nathan Day



Born: 25/11/73
Adelaide, South Australia
Height: 185cm Weight: 80kg
Playing Position: Striker
Another player in his first season at the club, after previously playing for the Adelaide Sharks, Day is a very determined player who is strong in the air and never shirks an issue or backs away from a challenge.

11
Steve Berry



Born: 20/9/68
Southport, England
Height: 180cm Weight: 85kg
Playing Position: Striker
Also in his first year with Sydney United, Berry has been a permanent fixture in the Pumas side this season. Tall and solid, he's become a key member of their midfield, after previously playing eight seasons at Blacktown City in the NSW State League.

12
Drew Laurence



Born: 7/9/78
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 175cm Weight: 75kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17)
Promising young midfielder who was a member of the Joys' squad. Has had experience in Scotland with Aberdeen, Motherwell and Hibernian, even playing against former England star Paul Gascoigne.

13
Joe Moric



Born: 25/5/78 Sydney, NSW
Height: 186cm Weight: 78kg
Playing Position: Defender or Midfield
Started playing soccer at the relatively late age of eleven and has had limited opportunities this season, but a youngster Sydney United will be looking to in the future.

15
Danny Townsend



Born: 29/4/77 Sydney, NSW
Height: 173cm Weight: 65kg
Playing Position: Midfielder or Striker
A little pocket dynamo, Townsend often comes on as a substitute and causes havoc among tiring defences with his electrifying pace. He's also extremely tenacious and fights like a terrier for possession.

20
Barney Smith



Born: 10/5/78
Liverpool, England
Height: 188cm Weight: 81kg
Playing Position: Goalkeeper
Rep. Honours: Aust. Schoolboys
Promising young goalkeeper who joined the Pumas this season from the Canberra Cosmos, after coming through the Australian Institute of Sport.

17
Michael Santalab



Born: 25/8/79 Canberra, ACT
Height: 182cm Weight: 82kg
Playing Position: Sweeper or Defender
Teenager who has made a big impression on player/coach David Mitchell, playing in most of Sydney United's games this season. Also played for the Australian Institute of Sport team in the National Youth League.

22
Tom Maric



Born: 12/8/77 Sydney, NSW
Height: 189cm Weight: 81kg
Playing Position: Defender
Tall defender who has been bidding his time at Sydney United for five seasons, now after playing for the Pumas junior side. Yet to play a first-team game but at only 21 has plenty of time on his side.

25
Ante Moric



Born: 10/4/74 Sydney, NSW
Height: 178cm Weight: 70kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17), Aust. Youth Int. (U/20), Olyroos (U/23) and Socceroos
Very talented midfielder who has played well over 100 Ericsson Cup matches and has represented Australia at all levels but is still only 25. Joined the Pumas six years ago from Canberra, and is very dangerous on his left foot.

28
Peter Bennett



Born: 27/10/69 Sydney, NSW
Height: 175cm Weight: 70kg
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Aust. Youth Int. (U/20)
In his first year at Sydney United but has established himself as a regular in the Pumas line-up this season. Played with Scottish club Aberdeen as part of a scholarship to Scotland.

18
David Mitchell



Born: 13/6/62
Glasgow, Scotland
Height: 184cm Weight: 85kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Socceroos
Powerful, strong striker who has done wonders as player/coach of the Sydney United team on limited resources. Playing appearances are now quite rare and usually restricted to brief appearances off the bench but still knows where the goals are after years of playing in the top leagues around Europe.

23
Dominic Usali



Born: 22/8/74 Sydney, NSW
Height: 170cm Weight: 78cm
Playing Position: Midfielder
Rep. Honours: Joys (U/17)
Has found it difficult to find a spot in the strong Sydney United midfield this year but has played a couple of seasons in the lower Italian divisions as well as representing the Joys.

19
Joel Griffiths



Born: 21/8/79 Sydney, NSW
Height: 175cm Weight: 68kg
Playing Position: Striker
Rep. Honours: Nigeria 99 with Socceroos
An exciting young player blessed with tremendous pace and skill. Has a good goalscoring record in his first season in the Ericsson Cup and recently represented the Australian U20 side at the World Youth Cup.

24
Robert Angievski



Born: 25/10/79
Melbourne, Victoria
Height: 173cm Weight: 70kg
Playing Position: Midfielder or Striker
Another of the Pumas promising young brigade that they'll be looking to in the future. Angievski is in his third season at the club but has yet to make his Ericsson Cup debut.

30
Mike Gibson



Born: 1/3/63 Sydney, NSW
Height: 180cm Weight: 90kg
Playing Position: Goalkeeper
Veteran 'keeper with nearly 300 Ericsson Cup games under his belt who initially started the season as the club's specialist goalkeeping coach but was forced to take to the field midway through the season after injuries struck and has performed superbly for the Pumas.



Mile Sterjovski



FULL NAME:
Mile Sterjovski

BIRTHPLACE:
Wollongong, Australia

PREVIOUS CLUBS:
AIS, Wollongong City

MARRIED: No

CHILDREN: No

PETS: No

CHILDHOOD TEAM:
Lake Heights JSC, Wollongong Olympic

MOST ADMIRED PLAYER:
Velimir Kupresak

BIGGEST INFLUENCE:
Parents & Grandfather

FAVOURITE FILM: Eraser

FAVOURITE ACTOR:
Sean Connery

FAVOURITE ACTRESS:
Jennifer Love Hewitt

BEST BAND/SINGER:
Live / Kiss

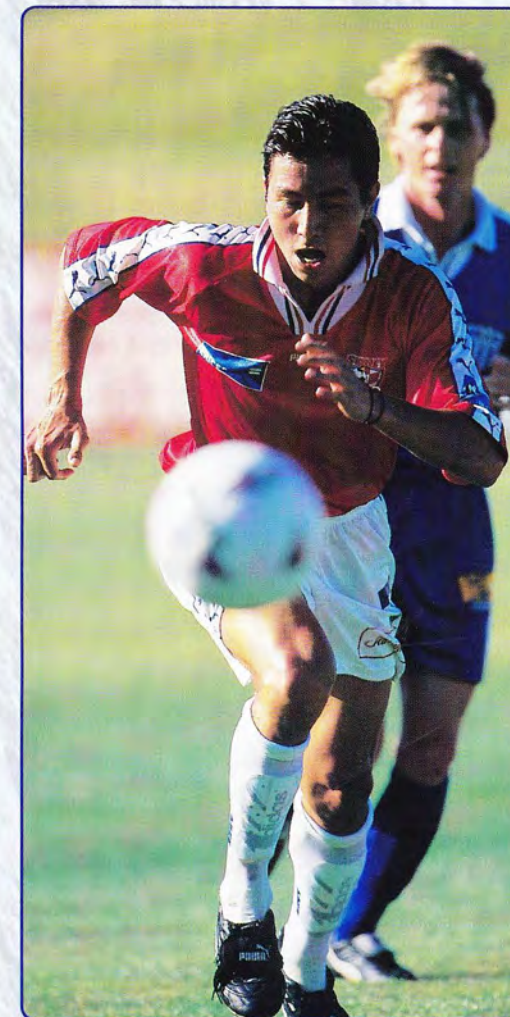
FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME:
Friends

FAVOURITE CARTOON:
SouthPark

FAVOURITE NON-FOOTBALL SPORTS STAR:
Michael Jordan

FUNNIEST TEAMMATE:
Richard Plesa

Jacob Burns



FULL NAME:
Jake Geoffrey Burns

NICKNAME:
Burns!

CITY AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH:
Sydney, NSW

DATE OF BIRTH: 21st April 1978

AGE: 21

STAR SIGN: Taurus

OCCUPATION: Full time soccer player

MARRIED: Single - Girlfriend Eileen

CHILDREN: No

PETS: No

LEFT OR RIGHT FOOTED: both

NATIONAL LEAGUE APPERANCES: 57

NATIONAL REP HONOURS: Olyroos

CLUBS PLAYED FOR:
St George, UTS Olympic

BIGGEST ACHIVEMENT TO DATE:
Playing in the National League

AMBITIONS:
to be a successful player and to travel overseas

CHILDHOOD TEAM:
UTS Olympic, ST George, Sydney United

MOST ADMIRED PLAYER: Kresimir Marusic

BIGGEST INFLUENCE: Parents

FAVOURITE FILM: White Men Can't Jump

FAVOURITE ACTOR: Woody Harrison

FAVOURITE ACTRESS: Salma Hayek

BEST BAND/SINGER: Jamiroquai

FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME: Seinfeld

FAVOURITE CARTOON: Bugs Bunny

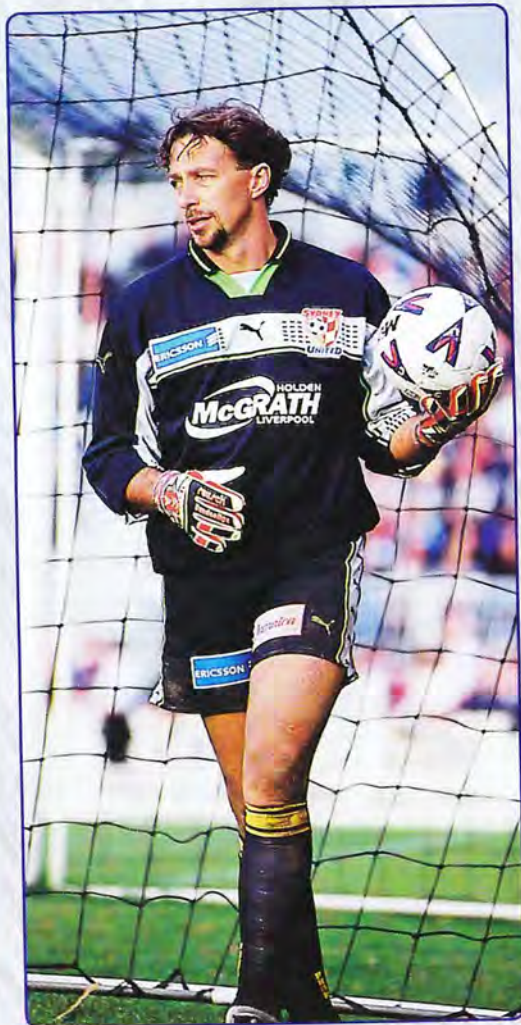
FAVOURITE NON-FOOTBALL SPORTS STAR:
Tiger Woods

FAVOURITE BRAND OF CLOTHING:
Marc's, Blue, Sabbab

GOAL YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE BEFORE YOU RETIRE: Play overseas and be successful

DREAM CHOICE OF WHICH WORLD LEAGUE:
England

Mike Gibson



FULL NAME:
Michael Graham Gibson

NICKNAME:
Gibbo

CITY AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH:
Australia

DATE OF BIRTH:
1st March 1963

AGE: 36

STAR SIGN: Pisces

OCCUPATION:
Soccer Player

MARRIED: Yes

CHILDREN: Yes

PETS: No

LEFT OR RIGHT FOOTED: Right

POSITION PLAYED:
Goalkeeper

NATIONAL LEAGUE APPEARANCES: 274

CLUBS PLAYED FOR:
St George, Penrith, Olympic, Marconi

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE:
Playing for Australia

MOST ADMIRER PLAYER:
Paul Trimoli

BIGGEST INFLUENCE:
Parents & Wife

FAVOURITE ACTOR: Lots

FAVOURITE ACTRESS: Lots

FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME:
Seinfeld

FAVOURITE CARTOON: Simpsons

FAVOURITE NON-FOOTBALL SPORTS STAR:
Michael Jordan

FUNNIEST TEAMMATE: Mitch & Laurie

DREAM CHOICE OF WHICH WORLD LEAGUE:
England

WORDS OF ADVICE:
Never give up

MOST DIFFICULT PLAYER:
Anyone who takes a shot

Ten things you (probably) didn't know about Sydney United

1. Since its establishment in 1958, the club has been known as Croatia (1958-64), Metro Adriatic (1965), South Sydney Croatia (1966-1976), Sydney Croatia (1977-83), Sydney CSC (1992/93) and Sydney United (1993/94).
2. In perhaps the most ambitious overseas tour taken by an Australian club side, the Sydney United team of 1978 visited and played against teams in Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto (two teams), Hamilton (all Canada) and Cleveland, Windsor, London, Chicago and Los Angeles (all USA). In these 10 games, the Australian club won eight, drew one and lost one.
3. In 1981 the club won the NSW state league championship, after getting through the entire season (26 games) without losing a game, and attracting an average home crowd of over 6,000. Meanwhile in the 1981 national league, champions Sydney City attracted an average 2,800 to its home games.
4. In its first year in the Ericsson Cup (1984), Sydney United went through five coaches. After round eight, United were last on the ladder and inaugural Ericsson Cup coach Attila Abonyi was shown the door. Then after three games at the helm, Mark Jones quit. Bruno Vidaic temporarily then took charge for three games, until Harry Noon was appointed. Noon lasted nine games until replaced by the imported Vedran Rozic with five games remaining.
5. Vedran Rozic was perhaps Sydney United's greatest ever player. Rozic captained the club in 113 Ericsson Cup games from 1984 to 1989, and was the club's coach for all but one of these games. Rozic had played over 600 times for strong Croatian club Hajduk Split between 1972 and 1984, a club which dominated the former-Yugoslav scene in the 1970s.
6. It was Sydney United, along with Sydney Olympic, who virtually kept the northern division of the Ericsson Cup financially viable in the years of a dual-conference league, 1984 to 1986. United's average home crowd during this period was 5,100, with Olympic not far behind (4,100). Of the remaining northern division clubs, Marconi with 2,200 was the only other team who averaged more than 2,000. Penrith City's average 1985 home crowd of 650 falls to 510 when the home game against Sydney Croatia is removed from the equation.
7. Current United goalkeeper Mike Gibson is only one of two goalkeepers to have scored a goal in open play in the Ericsson Cup. In a deferred mid week game in June 1988, the then St George 'keeper spotted his counterpart Bob Catlin off his line. Gibson booted a high ball which bounced once, well over the Marconi 'keeper's head, and into goal within the first minute of this game. St George won 3-2.



8. United jointly hold the record of consecutive wins in the Ericsson Cup. A nine match winning streak started with a 3-1 victory over South Melbourne on 20 October 1996, ending with a 2-1 win over Gippsland two months later. This equalled the nine consecutive wins Ericsson Cup record set by Olympic in 1984.
9. The world-wide dispersal of Sydney United's 1996/97 grand final team was unprecedented in Australian soccer. From the starting XI of this game, only three continued on with the club for the following season. Those who left were overseas departures Ante Milicic (who went to Holland), David Zdrilic (Switzerland), Aytek Genc (Malaysia) and Zeljko Kalac (England - although returned soon after). Mark Babic (Marconi), Ante Moric (Canberra) and Kresimir Marusic and Robert Trajkovski (Carlton) moved to different Ericsson Cup clubs.
10. New Guinea-born Manis Lamond holds the record for number of Ericsson Cup appearances for United, with 239 games played between 1986 and 1996. However he started in only 200 of these games. Lamond also holds United goalscoring record, with 63 goals. Velimir Kupresak (left) has started the most games for United, with 221 starting plus five substitute appearances for a combined amount of 226 appearances for the club.

StarTips

Some of Australia's leading Soccer identities selections for today's game.



Nick Carle



Joe Didulica



Clayton Zane



Mark Viduka

TOM SERMANNI

(Coach, Canberra Cosmos)

South Melbourne 2-0

Souths have been the toughest to play this season

GORDON HUNTER

(Captain, Canberra Cosmos)

South Melbourne 2-1

Close one, but the home town advantage, I'd back Souths

NICK CARLE

(Olyroo Striker, Sydney Olympic)

South Melbourne 1-0

JOE DIDULICA

(Olyroo Goalkeeper, Melbourne Knights)

Sydney United 2-0

Mitch's boys are going to fire up, Richard Plesa is going to blast another 30 metre goal into the top corner, and Mile Sterjovski will score the goal of the year!!

KASEY WEHRMAN

(Olyroo Midfielder, Brisbane Strikers)

Sydney United 2-1

United have had a rough year, and I don't think they'll come this far without taking something - and they deserve it.

STUART MUNRO

(Coach, Gippsland Falcons)

Sydney United 2-1

Call it a gut feeling, but I think United can get up

BRETT EMERTON

(Olyroo Captain, Sydney Olympic)

Sydney United 1-0

Because they've got Mile Sterjovski, and he'll score the winner.

CLAYTON ZANE

(Olyroo Striker, Northern Spirit)

Sydney United 1-0

Their form over the season should see them fight it out for a win in the grand final.

MARK VIDUKA

(Socceroo, formerly with Melbourne Knights, currently with Celtic, Scottish Premier League)

Sydney United 2-1

I think United can keep the momentum up to see it through.

Olympic Park

Venue for today's Grand Final



Fireworks herald the start of last year's Ericsson Cup Grand Final at Olympic Park.

In the heart of Australia's premier sporting precinct is Olympic Park, one of the country's premier sporting facilities. It has played host to a number of exciting events, including Speedway and Jon Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson and Beach Boys concerts. In addition, the National Soccer League grand final was held at Olympic Park last year. In fact, the venue was the home of the qualifying groups for soccer and athletics for the 1956 Olympic Games.

Olympic Park's track was replaced in 1996/97 and is currently used for major athletic events, school competitions and athletic training.

Recent developments have seen the demolishing of the eastern sports ground which was the home of the Melbourne Greyhound Racing Association to make way for the City Link Project.

With the introduction of the new National Rugby League team Melbourne Storm, further upgrades commenced in the corporate area within the western grandstand which included the refurbishment of the boxes, the backstage, VIP clubrooms and new seating and fencing to ensure public comfort.

The 18,500 seating and standing capacity of the sports ground was designed to ensure that patrons are close to the action and that they enjoy an uninterrupted view of the pitch. Viewing boxes and media rooms have been positioned in the grandstand to guarantee the best possible position for viewing the ground for television cameras, radio journalists and press photographers.



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Australians all let us rejoice
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil
Our home is girt by sea,
Our land abounds in nature's gifts,
Of beauty, rich and rare,
In history's page let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands
To make this Commonwealth of ours,
Renowned of all the lands.
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing
Advance Australia Fair.

Programme of events

Subject to change

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 12.00pm | Gates open |
| 12.15 | National Youth League Grand Final Adelaide City vs Australian Institute of Sport |
| 1.00 | NYL Grand Final half-time |
| 1.10 | NYL Grand Final kick-off second half |
| 1.55 | NYL Grand Final full-time |
| 2.05 | Sony Music Promotion |
| 2.25 | Merril Bainbridge on stage |
| 2.35 | Ericsson Cup Grand Finalists warm-up on pitch |
| 2.45 | Ericsson Cup highlights package |
| 3.02 | Skydivers |
| 3.10 | Australian National Atham |
| 3.15 | Ericsson Cup Grand Final KICK-OFF |
| 4.00 | Half-time and Ericsson Australia promotion |
| 4.15 | Kick-off, second half |
| 5.00 | Full-time and presentation ceremony |

Today's Referee

Today's Referee is 28 year old FIFA accredited Simon Micallef, who is married with one child. He played junior soccer before taking up the whistle in the Granville (NSW) Junior Association and has since run the middle for a number of home based internationals.

He has recently returned from the Nigeria '99 World Youth International Tournament where he was selected to referee the semi-final between Japan and Uruguay.

Micallef is employed by National Australia Bank as a compliance manager for both NSW and Queensland. His father Dennis, was also a referee.

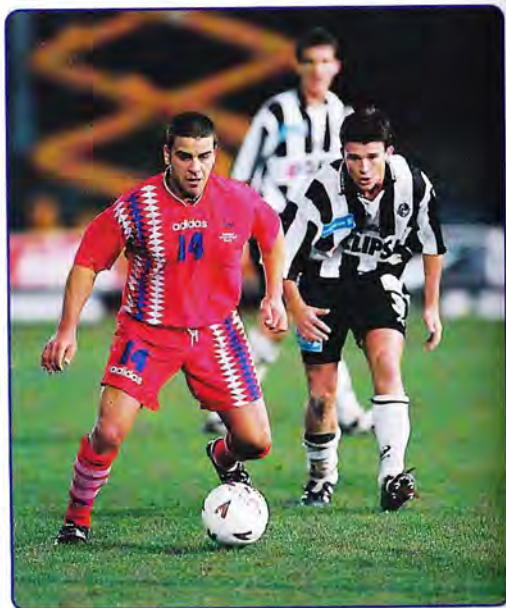
The National Youth League

By Roy Hay

The best-kept secret in Australian soccer, the National Youth League, had a very curious season. The Northern Division with 15 teams was highly competitive.

Northern Spirit brought a breath of novelty and a lot of talent including the Griffiths brothers, Adam and Ryan, Adam Snyder and Daniel Watkins, reaching the Preliminary Final in its first season. The AIS and Sydney Olympic battled out the minor premiership and while the all-round strength of the Institute and the goalscoring prowess of Elias Demourtzidi, Kevo Gulesenian, Ivan Ergic and Joshua Kennedy saw it to the title, it was Olympic which came out on top in the Preliminary Semi-Final.

Newcastle also made it into the last four, bowing out to the Spirit in the Elimination Semi-final. Marconi, thanks to the competition's leading goalscorer Mark Magger, Wollongong Wolves and a highly competitive New South Wales Institute of Sport challenged for the play-off spots but just came up short, while Queensland Academy faltered a little on the run in. Simon Catanzaro, Dylan McAllister, Nahuel Arrarte and Mark Byrnes starred for NSWIS. All these clubs played a mixture of Under-19s and much younger players in the spirit of the youth league. Clubs have realised that you cannot promote a whole youth squad at once and so it is necessary to use a range of age groups at this level.



AIS star Daniel Oneford has control in last year's Grand Final.

In the Southern Division only seven teams took part in 1998-99, with Carlton taking the minor premiership and eventually the title after a close 1-0 win over Gippsland Falcons. Ace Stojcevski's penalty kick proved decisive. Deniz Ekcici finished as top scorer for Carlton with 15 goals, and Tony Ouliaris had 11.

The Falcons came with a late run to beat the VIS and South Melbourne in the play-offs, the latter by four goals to three including a golden goal in extra-time. What made this result more extraordinary was that South Melbourne led 3-0 at one point thanks to a Grant Kennedy hat-trick, but the Falcons came back from the dead.

South Melbourne had an excellent season with Andrew Masholan top scoring. The VIS was on track for a crack at the title until the mid-season switch of personnel as the likes of Johnny Cvetanovski, and Naum Sekulovski went to the AIS and Scott McDonald joined Falcons where he went straight into the senior side.

Melbourne Knights had an ultimately disappointing season, though it did blood a number of youngsters who look like being big assets to the club in future. The same was true of Bulleen. Mathew Colina and Mark Tsiorlas, who went to the VIS, are two to watch out for in the future. Albury Wodonga never gave up trying and Quentin O'Grady battled hard all year.

In South Australia it was Adelaide City's year. City finished third in the league behind Adelaide Sharks and the South Australian Institute of Sport. A victory over Western Strikers, who came fourth, put City through to meet the Sharks whom they overcame by three goals to nil. The Grand Final against SASI was settled by a single goal from Michael Cartwright in 28 minutes. Simon Cecere, Nick Budin and Sam Moro were the best for City, while SASI's top players were Goulding, Saric and Agius.



Adelaide City's Mero Gosti challenges Ivan Ergic last year's Grand Final.

National Youth League 1998/99 SOUTHERN DIVISION Final Table

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlton	24	17	4	3	73	26	55
South Melbourne	24	14	3	7	44	25	45
V.I.S.	23	11	5	7	47	33	38
Gippsland Falcons	23	10	3	10	43	34	33
Melbourne Knights	24	9	3	12	43	52	30
Bulleen Inter	22	8	3	11	29	44	27
Albury-Wodonga	22	1	1	20	19	64	4

National Youth League 1998/99 NORTHERN DIVISION Final Table

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
A.I.S.	28	20	7	1	103	19	67
Sydney Olympic	28	20	4	4	89	30	64
Northern Spirit	28	20	2	6	68	24	62
Newcastle Breakers	28	18	5	5	62	29	59
Marconi Fairfield	28	17	5	6	78	26	56
NSWIS	28	17	3	8	69	33	54
Wollongong Wolves	28	17	2	9	85	35	53
OAS	28	15	2	11	72	44	47
Sydney United	28	12	4	12	59	48	40
Marconi Fairfield Colts	28	4	3	21	23	102	15
ACTAS	28	7	3	18	38	73	24
Northern Spirit Colts	28	4	3	21	23	102	15
Sydney Olympic Academy	28	3	5	20	26	99	14
Sydney United Colts	28	4	1	23	29	97	13
Wollongong Wolves Colts	28	1	3	24	15	142	6

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5. The Final Score: Fashanu, Segers and Grobbelaar	\$50	16. Diego Maradona: Hand of God	s/back \$20 h/back \$40
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7. Harry Redknapp My Autobiography	\$60	18. Fever Pitch	\$20
8. Michael Owen : two new books	\$25or\$20	19. Alex Ferguson: A Will to Win	\$25
9. Sticks up Australia's only fanzine Apr 99 edition	\$3	20. F/ball Hooligan books: 'England my England' and others	\$20
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11. Lorena Puskas: New Book	\$35		

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National Youth League 1998/99

NORTHERN DIVISION LEADING GOALSCORERS

As of 4 May, 1999 after Round 30

Mark Hagger (Marconi Youth)	24
Keva Gulesseriann (AIS)	21
Simon Catanzaro (NSWIS)	20
Daniel Kukucka (United Youth)	16
Elias Demourtzidis (AIS)	13
Russell Miner (QAS)	12
Ivan Ergic (AIS)	12
Adrian Cervinski (Olympic Youth)	12
Paul Tutureski (Wollongong Youth)	12
Adam Snyder (Spirit Youth)	11
Dylan MacAllistar (NSWIS)	11
Anthony Mondello (Marconi Colts)	11
Jim Bakis (Olympic Youth)	11
Daniel Watkins (Spirit Youth)	11

SOUTHERN DIVISION LEADING GOALSCORERS

As of 4 May, 1999 after Round 30

Andrew Mashoian (South Melb)	18
Deniz Ekici (Carlton)	15
Tony Ouliaris (Carlton)	11
Ang Motsiopoulos (VIS)	9
Scott McDonald (VIS)	8
Naum Sekulovski (VIS)	8
Alex Halikias (Gippsland)	8
Erhan Bayraktar (South Melb)	7
Michael Gulino (Bulleen Inter)	7
Jovanco Novacevski (Carlton)	6
Krvoje Matkovic (Knights)	6

RESULTS AS OF 3 MAY, 1999

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi Final
(Saturday 1 May, 1999)
V.I.S. 1 (Motsiopoulos 72)
Gippsland Falcons 3 (Puca 75, 82, Pardo 90)

Preliminary Semi Final (Sunday 2 May, 1999)
Carlton 3 (Ouliaris 12, 28, Delic 72)
South Melbourne 2 (own goal 52, Psonis 62)

NORTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi Final (Sunday 2 May, 1999)
Northern Spirit 1 (R. Griffiths 10)
Newcastle Breakers 0

Preliminary Semi Final
A.I.S. v Sydney Olympic

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Preliminary Final (Sunday 9 May, 1999)
South Melbourne 3 (Kennedy 15, 34, 53)
Gippsland Falcons 4 (Hutchinson 60, Puca 65, own goal 80, Duckworth 91 golden goal)

NORTHERN DIVISION

Preliminary Semi Final (Sunday 9 May, 1999)
A.I.S. 0
Sydney Olympic 3 (Bakis 11, 35, Cervinski 88)
National Youth League 1998/99
Results as of 17 May, 1999

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Divisional Grand Final
(Saturday 15 May, 1999)
Carlton 1 (Stojevski 27 pen)
Gippsland Falcons 0

NORTHERN DIVISION

Preliminary Final (Saturday 15 May, 1999)
A.I.S. 4 (Gulesserian 16, Kennedy 42, Milicevic 71, last 88)
Northern Spirit 2 (A. Griffiths 29, R. Griffiths 70)

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Divisional Play Off (Sunday 23 May, 1999)
Adelaide City 1 (McGregor golden goal)
Carlton 0

NORTHERN DIVISION

Divisional Grand Final (Sunday 23 May, 1999)
A.I.S. 0 (A.I.S. won 3-2 on penalty kicks)
Sydney Olympic 0

National Youth League 1998/99

Australian Institute of Sport

- 1 Michael TURNBULL
- 3 Ljubo MILICEVIC
- 4 Mark GRAHAM
- 5 Ivan ERGIC
- 8 Lucas PANTELIS
- 9 Kevo GULESSERIAN
- 10 Josh KENNEDY
- 11 Grant LAST
- 12 Wayne SRHOJ
- 13 Wes BRYETT
- 14 Darryl HATHWAY
- 16 Johnny CVETANOSKI
- 17 Jade NORTH
- 19 Elias DEMOURTZIDIS
- 20 Daniel VASILEVSKI
- 22 Matthew KEMP

Coach - Steve O'CONNOR
Assistant Coach - Mike MILOVANIC

Adelaide City Youth League Squad

- 1 Anthony BREADON
- 2 Travis DODD
- 3 John FUSCO
- 4 Josh ROMANOWICZ
- 5 Michael CARTWRIGHT
- 6 David TERMINELLO
- 7 Nick BUDIN
- 8 Robby SARACENO
- 9 Nick SABLJAC
- 10 Dustie MCGREGOR
- 11 Louis BRAIN
- 12 Ivano PARIS
- 13 Sam MORO
- 14 Tony MUSOLINO
- 15 Vas PARHAS
- 20 Simon COCENE

Coach - Serge MELTA
Assistant Coach - Lawry SANCILIO

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE GRAND FINAL MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Pablo Solis
Assistant Referees: Nenad Kerkez and Branislav Minic
Fourth Official: Lewis Giuseffi
Inspector: David Rashleigh

StarTips

Some of Australia's leading Soccer identities selections for today's game.



Alvin Ceccoli

ALVIN CECCOLI

(Socceroo, formerly with Wollongong Wolves, currently with AEK ATHENS in Greek 1st Division)

South Melbourne 1-0

South Melbourne have been there in the final series for many years, won it last year, and they show each year why they're such a good team - they've performed well against these two teams through the year, and especially in a final, you saw what South Melbourne did to Carlton last year!

CHRIS COYNE

(Olyroo Defender, currently with WEST HAM in the English Premier League)

South Melbourne 3-1

I don't know why I tipped this, I just did!

MARK ROBERTSON

(Olyroo Midfielder, currently with BURNLEY in the English 2nd Division)

South Melbourne 2-1

I think South Melbourne is the stronger team overall - says me the big tipster!!

SCOTT O'DONNELL

(currently playing with Tampines Rovers in the S-League in Singapore)

South Melbourne 1-0

I think South Melbourne will be too strong to beat in Melbourne

TONY POPOVIC

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney United, currently playing with Hiroshima Sanfrecce in J-League Japan)

Sydney United 3-1

I could never tip against Sydney United, my old club, and I'm sure they'll surprise all on Grand Final Day

MATT HORSLEY

(Captain, Wollongong Wolves)

South Melbourne 2-1

Experience and home town advantage will rule on the day.

JOHN KOSMINA

(Coach, Brisbane Strikers)

South Melbourne 2-1

The home ground advantage will put South Melbourne over the line.

AURELIO VIDMAR

(Socceroo, formerly with Adelaide City, currently with Hiroshima Sanfrecce in the J-League, Japan)

South Melbourne 2-1

As much as I'd like to see Dave Mitchell's young side get up, South Melbourne's Grand Final experience could prove too much

HAYDEN FOXE

(Olyroo Defender, currently with Hiroshima Sanfrecce in the J-League, Japan)

South Melbourne 2-1

I've gone for South as they have been there before and have the experience behind them, even though they are still a very young side. Good luck to both teams.

Tony Popovic



John Kosmina



Aurelio Vidmar



Statistics Season 1998/99

HOME & AWAY TABLE 1998/99

Team	Pl	Home					Away					Pts
		W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	
Sydney United	28	11	2	1	33	16	7	2	5	20	17	58
South Melbourne	28	12	2	0	30	10	5	4	5	20	16	57
Perth Glory	28	9	2	3	30	13	7	3	4	32	24	53
Marconi Fairfield	28	9	1	4	31	18	6	2	6	22	29	48
Northern Spirit	28	9	2	3	19	10	5	2	7	17	25	46
Adelaide City	28	10	3	1	29	8	3	3	8	10	18	45
Sydney Olympic	28	10	3	1	33	13	2	4	8	13	23	43
Newcastle Breakers	28	6	5	3	19	15	5	2	7	10	18	40
Brisbane Strikers	28	7	4	3	24	16	4	2	8	17	31	39
Wollongong Wolves	28	5	5	4	27	22	3	3	8	18	30	32
Carlton SC	28	7	2	5	32	19	2	2	10	15	28	31
Melbourne Knights	28	6	2	6	21	18	2	3	9	11	25	29
Adelaide Sharks	28	5	4	5	24	18	2	2	10	12	28	27
Gippsland Falcons	28	4	4	6	8	17	1	6	7	9	27	25
Canberra Cosmos	28	3	1	10	11	23	1	2	11	10	32	15

RESULTS SEASON 1998/99

Team	Sydney United	South Melbourne	Perth Glory	Marconi Fairfield	Northern Spirit	Adelaide City	Sydney Olympic	Newcastle Breakers	Brisbane Strikers	Wollongong Wolves	Carlton SC	Melbourne Knights	Adelaide Sharks	Gippsland Falcons	Canberra Cosmos
Sydney United		1-0	3-4	3-2	1-0	1-1	4-1	1-1	4-3	2-1	2-1	3-1	4-0	2-0	
South Melbourne	1-0		2-1	2-0	2-0	1-1	3-1	2-0	3-0	3-1	4-4	3-1	1-0	2-1	1-0
Perth Glory	3-1	2-1		2-2	2-0	1-2	2-2	0-1	6-0	0-1	3-0	3-1	2-1	1-0	3-1
Marconi Fairfield	2-0	5-3	3-4		1-0	1-0	2-1	0-1	1-2	3-3	0-2	2-0	4-0	5-1	2-1
Northern Spirit	1-2	1-0	1-0	4-0		1-0	0-2	0-0	1-1	1-0	3-1	2-1	2-1	1-0	1-2
Adelaide City	3-2	1-1	0-1	2-0	2-0		1-0	1-0	3-0	4-4	3-0	3-0	5-0	0-0	1-0
Sydney Olympic	2-1	1-1	3-1	5-0	2-3	2-1		2-1	2-2	3-2	3-0	1-0	0-0	5-0	
Newcastle Breakers	0-1	0-0	3-2	1-2	1-1	1-0	1-1		1-0	3-1	1-0	2-2	2-2	1-2	2-1
Brisbane Strikers	2-2	0-1	2-2	3-2	5-1	0-1	2-1	1-2		1-0	1-0	0-0	2-1	2-2	3-1
Wollongong Wolves	0-1	2-1	3-3	2-5	3-2	1-1	1-1	1-2	1-1		1-2	0-0	2-0	6-1	4-2
Carlton SC	1-3	0-3	1-2	1-2	1-2	4-1	0-0	3-0	5-2	4-0		4-2	2-2	3-0	3-0
Melbourne Knights	0-1	0-1	1-1	1-2	2-3	3-1	2-1	1-0	3-2	1-2	2-1		0-1	2-2	3-0
Adelaide Sharks	1-2	1-1	1-3	2-3	2-3	1-0	4-1	3-1	1-2	5-0	1-1	1-0		0-0	1-1
Gippsland Falcons	0-0	1-4	0-3	0-0	1-1	1-0	1-0	0-1	0-2	0-3	2-1	0-1	1-0		1-1
Canberra Cosmos	1-4	1-3	1-5	1-2	0-1	0-1	0-1	3-0	0-1	1-0	2-0	0-2	1-3	0-0	

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Pablo Cardozo	18
Sydney Olympic	
Mile Sterjovski	17
Sydney United	
Brad Maloney	16
Marconi Fairfield	
Damian Mori	15
Adelaide City	
Vaughan Coveny	14
South Melbourne	
Alex Moriera	12
Carlton SC	
Michael Curcija	12
South Melbourne	

SOUTH MELBOURNE GOALSCORERS

Player	98/99	Total NSL
Vaughan Coveny	14	56
Michael Curcija	12	28
John Anastasiadis	6	18
Goran Lozanovski	5	17
Paul Trimboli	3	96
Nick Orlic	3	13
Tansel Baser	2	18
Jason Polak	2	2
David Clarkson	1	28
Jim Tsekinis	1	19
Steve Panopoulos	1	14

SYDNEY UNITED GOALSCORERS

Player	98/99	Total NSL
Mile Sterjovski	19	25
Joel Griffiths	8	27
Nathan Day	16	19
Walter Ardone	13	26
Jacob Burns	5	26
Steve Berry	3	29
David Barrett	12	28
Richard Plesa	4	30
Michael Santolab	2	23
Danny Townsend	2	25
David Mitchell	33	12
Joe Caleta	31	15
Velimir Kupresak	12	28
Peter Bennett	3	29
Joe Vrkic	2	27
Steve Eagleton	1	3



Ericsson Cup Records

RECORD SCORES

Elimination Final

South Melbourne 5 – Gippsland Falcons 1 (94/95 series, second leg)

Major Semi-Final

Marconi Fairfield 7 – South Melbourne 0 (92/93 series, second leg)

Minor Semi-Final

Adelaide City 4 Wollongong Wolves 0 (92/93 series)
Adelaide City 4 – Marconi Fairfield 0 (92/93 series, second leg)

Preliminary Final

Sydney Olympic 3 – Apia Leichhardt 0 (1984 series – northern division)

Marconi Fairfield 4 – Adelaide City 1 (95/96 series)

Grand Final

No team has won a grand final by more than two goals

South Melbourne 4 – Heidelberg 2 (1984 series – southern division grand final)

Sydney City 2 – Marconi 0 (1985 series – northern division grand final)

Adelaide City 3 – Sydney Olympic 1 (1986 series – national grand final – second leg)

Sydney Olympic 2 – Marconi Fairfield 0 (89/90 series)

Melbourne Knights 2 – Adelaide City 0 (94/95 series)
Brisbane Strikers 2 – Sydney United 0 (97/97 series)

ALL THE ERICSSON CUP CHAMPIONS WITH RUNNERS UP

Season	Champion	Runners up
1977	Sydney City	Marconi
1978	West Adelaide	Sydney City
1979	Marconi	Heidelberg
1980	Sydney City	Heidelberg
1981	Sydney City	South Melbourne
1982	Sydney City	St George
1983	St George	Sydney City
1984	South Melbourne	Sydney Olympic
1985	Brunswick	Sydney City
1986	Adelaide City	Sydney Olympic
1987	Leichhardt	Preston
1988	Marconi	Sydney United
1989	Marconi	Sydney United
1989/90	UTS Olympic	Marconi
1990/91	South Melbourne	Melbourne Knights
1991/92	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights
1992/93	Marconi	Adelaide City
1993/94	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights
1994/95	Melbourne Knights	Adelaide City
1995/96	Melbourne Knights	Marconi
1996/97	Brisbane Strikers	Sydney United
1997/98	South Melbourne	Carlton

ATTENDANCE RECORDS FOR FINALS SERIES

Highest: 96,800 (96/97 series)

Lowest: 43,800 (1988 series)

ALL-TIME FINALS GOALSCORERS

	Goals	Mtchs	Ave	Clubs scored for and number of goals in finals games
Francis Awaritefe	9	23	0.39	Melbourne Knights 3, South Melbourne 2, Marconi 4
Frank Farina	7	13	0.54	Sydney City 4, Marconi 1, Brisbane Strikers 2
Damian Mori	8	23	0.32	Adelaide City 8
Marshall Soper	7	15	0.47	Sydney Olympic 6, Parramatta Eagles 1
Andrew Harper	6	13	0.46	Marconi 6
Bradley Hassell	6	14	0.43	Adelaide City 6
Paul Trimboli	6	28	0.21	South Melbourne 6
Carl Veart	6	19	0.32	Adelaide City 6
Adrian Cervinski	5	9	0.56	Melbourne Knights 5
Charlie Egan	5	6	0.83	South Melbourne 5
David Lowe	5	18	0.28	Marconi 5
Brad Maloney	5	12	0.42	Sydney Olympic 1, Marconi 4
Steve Maxwell	5	17	0.29	Adelaide City 5
Sergio Melta	5	23	0.22	Adelaide City 5
Zlatko Nastevski	5	6	0.83	Marconi 5
Paul Wade	5	22	0.23	Brunswick 3, South Melbourne 2

ALL-TIME FINALS GAMES RECORDS

	Mtchs	W	D	L	Goals	Clubs played for and number of appearances in finals games
Alex Tobin	37	21	3	12	0	Adelaide City 37
Milan Ivanovic	32	17	3	12	0	Adelaide City 32
Francis Awaritefe	29	10	7	12	6	Melbourne Knights 9, South Melbourne 10, Marconi 10
Mike Petersen	28	14	5	9	2	Heidelberg 4, Brunswick 5, South Melbourne 19
Paul Trimboli	28	12	4	12	0	South Melbourne 28
Joe Mullen	26	17	1	8	3	Adelaide City 26
Sergio Melta	24	15	1	8	1	Adelaide City 24
Ian Gray	23	10	5	8	0	Apia Leichhardt 3, Marconi 20
Gary Phillips	23	12	1	10	1	South Melbourne 19, Brisbane Strikers 4
Steve Maxwell	22	14	1	7	5	Adelaide City 22
Damian Mori	23	12	4	7	0	Melbourne Knights 2, Adelaide City 21

RECORD CROWDS

Elimination Final

25,067 Perth Glory v Adelaide City (98/99 series)

Major Semi-Final

14,850 South Melbourne v Carlton (97/98 series)

Minor Semi-Final

27,556 Perth Glory v Marconi (98/99 series)

Preliminary Final

11,507 South Melbourne v Adelaide City (90/91 series)

Grand Final

40,446 Brisbane v Sydney Utd (96/97 series)

ROLL OF HONOUR

Player	Champion	Runners up	Player of the year	U/21 player of the year	Top goal scorer	Coach of the year
John Kosmina	Sydney City	Marconi	Jim Rooney (Marconi)	John Kosmina (Adelaide City)	Ken Boden (Newcastle Utd)	Rale Rasic (Marconi)
Ken Boden	Adelaide Sharks	Sydney City	Ken Boden (Newcastle Utd)	Ian Souness (Sydney City)	Clive Eaton (Western Suburbs)	Gerry Chalke (Sydney City)
Clive Eaton	Marconi	Heidelberg	Ivo Fykal (Marconi)	Eddie Krcovic (Marconi)	Mark Jankovic (Marconi)	Les Schenflug (Marconi)
Mark Jankovic	Sydney City	South Melbourne	Jim Hermiston (Brisbane Lions)	John Spanos (Sydney City)	Gary Cole (Heidelberg)	John Margaritis (South Melbourne)
Gary Cole	Sydney City	St George	Bobby Russell (Adelaide City)	David Mitchell (Adelaide City)	Gary Cole (Heidelberg)	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
David Mitchell	Sydney City	Sydney City	Peter Karholos (Sydney Olympic)	David Lowe (Newcastle Utd)	John Kosmina (Sydney City)	Frank Arok (St George)
John Kosmina	St George	Sydney City	Joe Watson (Sydney City)	Oscar Ciso (South Melbourne)	Doug Brown (South Melbourne)	Frank Arok (St George)
Oscar Ciso	South Melbourne	Sydney Olympic	Sergio Melta (Adelaide City)	Tony Franken (Canberra City)	Doug Brown (South Melbourne)	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
Tony Franken	Brunswick	Sydney City	Graham Honeyman (Adelaide Sharks)	Alan Hunter (Brisbane Lions)	Charlie Egan (South Melbourne)	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
Alan Hunter	Adelaide City	Sydney Olympic	Bobby Russell (South Melbourne)	Graham Arnold (Sydney United)	Draigo Sekulovic (Footscray)	Rale Rasic (Leichhardt)
Graham Arnold	Leichhardt	Preston	Graham Arnold (Sydney United)	Ernie Tapai (Footscray)	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Ernie Tapai	Marconi	Sydney United	Andrew Zinn (Brunswick)	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Andrew Zinn	Marconi	Sydney Olympic	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Frank Farina (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Frank Farina	Marconi	Sydney Olympic	Zlatko Nastevski (Marconi)	Paul Okon (Marconi)	Zlatko Nastevski (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Zlatko Nastevski	Marconi	Melbourne Knights	Milan Ivanovic (Adelaide City)	David Seal (Sydney United)	David Seal (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Milan Ivanovic	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights	Jojo Biskic (Melbourne Knights)	Kevin Muscat (Heidelberg)	Kevin Muscat (Heidelberg)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Jojo Biskic	Marconi	Adelaide City	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)	Steve Conica (Marconi)	Steve Conica (Marconi)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Paul Trimboli	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Mark Viduka	Melbourne Knights	Adelaide City	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Damian Mori	Melbourne Knights	Marconi	Damian Mori (Adelaide City)	Goran Lozanowski (Adelaide City)	Goran Lozanowski (Adelaide City)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Kresimir Matusic	Brisbane Strikers	Sydney United	Kresimir Matusic (Sydney United)	Kasey Wehrman (Brisbane Strikers)	Kasey Wehrman (Brisbane Strikers)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
Brett Emerson	South Melbourne	Carlton	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)	Brett Emerson (Sydney Olympic)	Brett Emerson (Sydney Olympic)	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)

RECORDS ALL-TIME ERICSSON CUP GOALSCORERS

Player	Goals	Apps	Average
Rod Brown	137	346	0.40
John Kosmina	133	289	0.46
Damian Mori	126	265	0.48
Marshall Soper	119	318	0.37
Francis Awaritefe	113	284	0.40
Gary Cole	109	246	0.44
Ivan Kelic	105	250	0.42
Warren Spink	104	273	0.38
John Markovski	103	313	0.33
Frank Farina	102	206	0.50
Mark Jankovics	99	227	0.44
Paul Trimboli	96	345	0.28
Andrew Harper	92	273	0.34
Phil O'Connor	88	222	0.40
Charlie Egan	83	178	0.47

ALL-TIME ERICSSON CUP GAME RECORDS

Player	Years	Games	Goals
Sergio Melta	1977-95	445	64
Mike O'Shea	1977-96	406	13
Alex Tobin	1984-99	405	27
Theo Selemidis	1977-94	393	24
Gary Phillips	1982-97	377	20
Danny Wright	1980-97	353	49
Graham Jennings	1979-94	351	14
Rod Brown	1983-98	346	137
David Lowe	1982-97	345	81
Paul Trimboli	1987-99	345	96

ALL-TIME ERICSSON CUP TABLE

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts*
South Melbourne	609	292	147	170	962	703	1023
Marconi	609	287	143	179	1055	744	1004
Adelaide City	609	254	162	193	890	692	924
Sydney Olympic	583	230	160	193	827	734	850
Sydney United	415	195	109	111	613	477	694
Melbourne Knights	415	191	94	130	643	500	667
Adelaide Sharks	507	169	104	234	631	776	611
Wollongong Wolves	481	152	126	203	613	731	582
Brisbane Strikers	215	80	44	91	298	318	284
Gippsland Falcons	189	56	56	77	214	296	224
Newcastle Breakers	191	48	54	89	230	321	198
Perth Glory	80	37	16	27	145	118	127
Canberra Cosmos	113	17	27	69	128	241	78
Carlton	54	21	13	20	91	71	76
Northern Spirit	28	14	4	10	36	35	46

1998/99 teams only. Finals games excluded.

*Points based on 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw.

ALL-TIME ERICSSON CUP COACHING RECORDS

Coach	Years	NSL games
Frank Arok	1982-98	429
Zoran Matic	1986-99	363
Manfred Schaefer	1977-99	333
Rale Rasic	1977-98	302
Raul Blanco	1979-96	284
Eddie Thomson	1980-89	272
John Margaritis	1977-93	264
Len McKendry	1980-91	212
David Ratcliffe	1987-97	211
Les Scheinflug	1977-89	205

Alex Tobin

Leading the way

When Alex Tobin was approached to sign with Adelaide City in 1984 he hadn't heard of the club. He didn't even know there was a national soccer league.

How ironic that in little more than a season, Tobin - who has played 405 games - almost certainly will break the record for Ericsson Cup appearances. Former teammate Serge Malta holds the record with 445. Mike O'Shea (406) is the only other player to break 400.

But its championships that matter to Tobin - he has played in each of City's three national triumphs.

While a fourth rarely looked possible this season, Tobin feels he has another championship left in him, perhaps this season.

As for the Socceroos, he has no intention of retiring. In a few weeks he will add to his record 87 appearances when the Socceroos play the FIFA World Stars. Then comes Manchester United and later in the year, Brazil.

Tobin took up the game purely by chance. He was a nine-year-old at St Leonard's Primary School in suburban Adelaide when a soccer team was organised.

He later joined Birkalla, playing in the under-12, 13 and 14 teams, where he was coached by FIFA referee Don Campbell. He made his senior debut as a 16-year-old in 1984, against Adelaide City's second division team.

Watching this day was City's Ericsson Cup coach Edmund Kreft. Tobin signed with City, after only four games with Birkalla.

He made his Ericsson Cup debut on May 14, 1984 - a 0-1 away loss to South Melbourne. Tall and gangly, there was little hint of the career that was to unfold.

He was to make his mark as a quick, strong and clean tackling defender, who never seemed to lose his cool. Remarkably, not once has he been sent off.

The highlights of Tobin's 405 games, have been the championships won in 1986, 1992 and 1994 under Coach Zoran Matic.

"They were all tough, but the first (against Sydney Olympic) was the sweetest," Tobin said. "We were given little hope after losing the first leg (in Adelaide). But we knew we could turn it around in Sydney if we scored first (a 3-1 win) and that's what happened."

Tobin has had only three regular goalkeepers behind him - Steve McNally, Robert Zabica and Jason Petkovic.

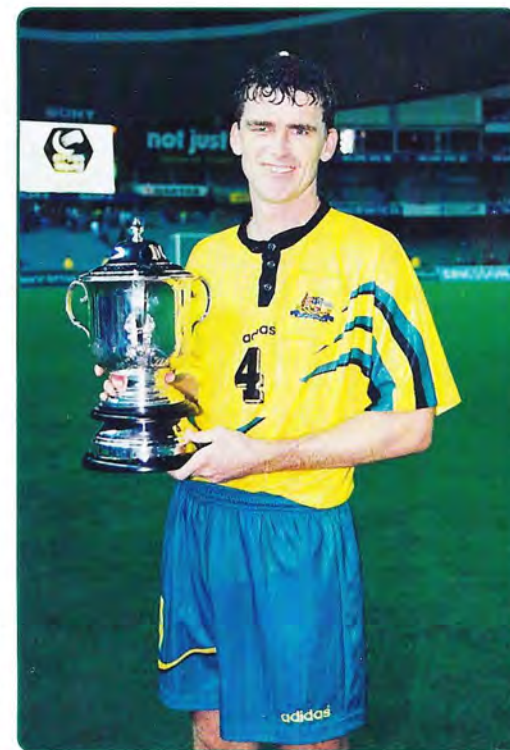
He hesitates when asked to nominate the best strikers he's played again in the Ericsson Cup in the past 15 seasons. While John Kosmina, Frank Farina and Mark Vikuka were quick, strong and lethal, he remembers Marconi's Zlatko Nastavski being an 'elusive and brilliant finisher'.

For the Socceroos he's had to mark some of the games greatest, including Ronaldo, Argentinian hero Gabriel Batistuta, and the maestro, Eric Cantona. It was Batistuta's deflected shot off Tobin in a thunderous River Plate Stadium in Buenos Aires, which took Argentina to the 1994 World Cup.

When Tobin approached his 400th game (against the Adelaide Sharks) he had to deal with the inevitable questions, When would he retire, how many more games could play?

It was the only time this season Tobin looked remotely like losing his cool. "I haven't thought of retirement. Until I get some physical signs the body is not coping I intend to play as long as I can. How many years that is - I can't tell you."

Meno Toutsidis



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Four Diegos Soft Sombrero Moment

It's time to sit back and relax, and share a Soft Sombrero moment with Aussies abroad and the Four Diegos.



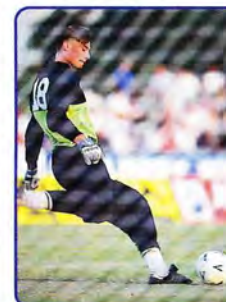
FRANK JURIC- FORTUNA DUSSELDORF - GERMAN 2ND DIVISION

Diegos: "Frank, it sounds like you've formed your very own Aussie soccer Rat Pack over there. Tell us a little about the German girls - have you got a German girlfriend and is she a Claudia Schiffer looks alike?"

Juric: "Well actually Claudia lives down the road from me, so I see her all the time."

Diegos: "Have you used the sure fire 'Four Diego' method of meeting a supermodel - going over to her place and asking for a cup of sugar?"

Juric: "Actually she comes over to me - she knows me now!"

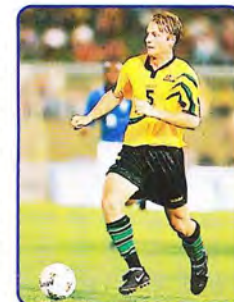


VINNIE GRELLA - EMPOLI - ITALY SERIE A

Diegos: "Your first hit-out for Italian club, Empoli was against the mighty Juventus in front of 45,000 people at the Stadio Del Alpi, and you marked none other than, France's World Cup hero, Zinedine Zidane."

We just want to know, did you welcome him with a good old fashioned Springvale City tackle from behind and say 'Hi, I'm Vinnie Grella from Australia, who are you?'

Grella: "No none of that. To tell you the truth, I didn't get near him. He was that quick and nimble. It was as though he was born on another planet. He was just a freak."



HAYDEN FOXE - SANFRECCE HIROSHIMA - JAPANESE J LEAGUE

Diegos: "You made your debut for the J-League against the United States. What was it like playing the Yanks on your debut, and did Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky play any part in the pre-game entertainment?"

Foxe: "It was really great. I've been waiting a long time to get my first game with the national team. I was hoping to play a few years ago but injuries hampered my progress. As far as Bill and Monica are concerned well... unfortunately Raul wouldn't let us watch that type of entertainment before a match anyway."



JOHN ALOISI - COVENTRY CITY - ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Diegos: "Stan Lazaridis' team, West Ham, played Coventry just after Christmas. Did you and Stan cross paths on the pitch, and was there time to give Stan a traditional Aussie 'wedgy or fuzz nut' welcome?"

Aloisi: "Actually I did start that game, but I didn't get a chance to give Stan a wedgy. It would've been something I would've loved to do though. We had a chat just before the kick off and during the game a little bit, but I was trying to concentrate because it was the first game I started in so I couldn't really talk that much."



STAN LAZARIDIS - WEST HAM - ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Diegos: "Recently in the English 'Match of the Day' weekly highlights package on SBS TV, the Diegos where cheering you on as you twinkle toed past three Arsenal defenders and threaded an incisive through ball to your team mate, Ian Wright in a goal-scoring position. He proceeded to miss the chance and the Hammers lost the London derby 1-0. Now that you're one of the stars of the team, we want to know how you handle those situations. Do you let him have it in the change rooms after the game, do you back-stab him to your other team mates or do you just give him a hug of sympathy in the showers and say better luck next time?"

Lazaridis: "When you lose a game, you look back and try to work out where you could've got a point from or where you could've won the game. When you look back at that game, that was our best chance of the game. So you might ask your teammate the question in a polite sort of a way, querying what went wrong. Ian Wright is a class player. He scores and misses a lot of goals. That's the lot of a striker, I suppose. It's frustrating from my point of view, if you're a creator because you want to see your good work converted to goals. It makes you look good and earns the team valuable points as well. I wouldn't hug him in the showers ever, let alone after he has missed a goal."

NED ZELIC - TSV 1860 MUNICH - GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Diegos: "When asked, many years ago, why you didn't make yourself available to play for Australia during the Atlanta Olympics, you were quoted as saying, 'that playing for Australia doesn't always put the Coco Pops on the table'. What are the Coco pops like in Germany?"

Zelic: "Well, I'm still an avid fan of Coco Pops. I mix them with some Frosties and have them every morning. It's a great start to the day."

Diegos: "You have been the only Australian player to ever be selected to play for a FIFA All-Star team. Who have been some of the players that you've played with in these games and how did they cope with the Aussie 'Dencorub on the jock strap' prank in the dressing before the game?"

Zelic: "There were quite a few players - Lothar Matthaus, Jurgen Klinsman, George Weah, Redondo from Argentina and numerous other stars. Maradona was supposed to turn up as well. He was one of my



boyhood heroes but didn't rock up in the end, which was disappointing. Perhaps he had heard of the 'Dencorub on the jock strap' prank and decided he wasn't going to take the risk."

MARK SCHWARZER - MIDDLESBROUGH - ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Diegos: "Back in 1993, in the cut throat World Cup qualifier against Canada, it seemed that your winning penalty shoot out save and subsequent hot and spicy kiss from teammate, Aurelio Vidmar, triggered a professional career overseas. Looking back, was it the save against Canada or Aurelio's kiss that did it for you?"

Schwarzer: "It was a bit of both, I must say. The save obviously did help me but the kiss inspired me."

JOHN FILAN - BLACKBURN ROVERS - ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Diegos: "Mark Bosnich has had a couple of well publicised spats with English supporters behind his goal over the years. What is the funniest thing opposition supporters have said to you?"

Filan: "The weirdest experience I've ever had was when I first signed at Blackburn. A lady came in at one of the club's signing sessions and got so excited that she took off her false leg and wanted me to sign it. The only problem was that it still had a shoe and stocking on it. You get used to some weird things over here."

TONY VIDMAR - GLASGOW RANGERS - SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Diegos: "The Four Diego's Scottish correspondent, Jimmy Diego, tells us you scored against Hamilton Academicals in the Scottish FA Cup. It was your first goal for the club and no doubt a special moment for you. How did you celebrate the goal? Did you slip on a kilt and play an imaginary bagpipe around the corner flag to get into the Scottish groove of goal celebration?"



Vidmar: "Yes I actually slipped on the kilt for the occasion. I made sure the public got a glimpse of what is under an aussie's kilt. I don't know whether they appreciated the sight though."

DANNY TIATTO - MANCHESTER CITY - ENGLISH 2ND DIVISION

Diegos: "In Manchester it's the United boys that seem to be the ones who get to go out with the Spice Girls, drive flashy cars and make obscene amounts of money. The City boys on the other hand, appear to do it tough, without as much glamour, trappings and having little or no chance with the Spice Girls. What's it like in Manchester when you're playing for Manchester City rather than United?"

Tiatto: "The majority of 'City' supporters live in Manchester whereas many of the 'United' supporters come from outside the city. They tend to be the people who choose United because they are a winning team. It's really weird. It seems that everyone living in Manchester hates Manchester United, and would rather follow 'City'. That unfortunately doesn't stop the Spice Girls going out with them rather than us though."

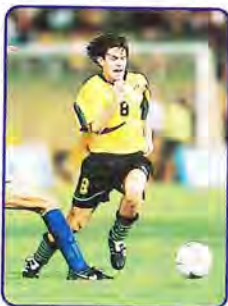
NICK RIZZO - CRYSTAL PALACE - ENGLISH 1ST DIVISION

Diegos: "Our resident sports physiotherapist, Dr. Grom, tells us that the English are a little behind the Aussies when it comes to the treatment of sports injuries. Was it the labotomy your English club doctor was attempting to give you when treating your bad knee, that compelled you to return home and seek Aussie medical advice?"

Rizzo: "I had a scan and the English doctors said that I didn't need an operation, so I asked permission to come home. When I got home I went to see a specialist. He looked at me and asked 'What the hell is that?' I was told that the English doctors had given me the wrong knee brace. Apparently it was the brace that you wear when you come back to play. So my Aussie specialist replaced the brace with the correct one and instead of being out for three months as originally estimated, I've been told that I'll be only out for two months, which makes me feel a lot better."

JANSEL BASER - TRABZONSPOR - TURKISH 1ST DIVISION

Diegos: "A tradition in Turkey with some clubs is to slaughter a sheep on the ground before the game and smear the blood on the forehead of the



players to inspire them to great feats. Have you been smeared with sheep's blood yet, and after a poor performance has the crowd ever considered substituting the sheep with the coach to guarantee victory?"

Baser: "You wouldn't believe that that actually occurred three weeks ago. They get the blood and they wipe it on your forehead as a sign of luck and good fortune. I personally prefer to keep away from those types of initiations. The sight of anyone's blood, in particular sheep's blood, makes me squirm."

Diegos: "There is something about slaughtering a sheep on the tarmac of a Turkish airport that doesn't conjure up great visions of pre-match preparation?"

Baser: "Yeah, it's a little different to what Ange Postecoglou used to do at South Melbourne that's for sure."

KEVIN MUSCAT - WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS - ENGLISH 1ST DIVISION

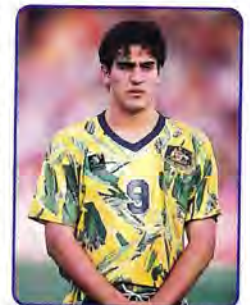
Diegos: "Playing at Wembley must have been a great experience for you. Do the Wembley minders tell you not to shake the Queen's hand with the hand that you put the dencorub on with?"

Muscat: "Thankfully it wasn't her that came down but I'm sure that whoever it was got a good dose of dencorub third degree burn from my handshake."

PAUL AGOSTINO - TSV 1860 MUNICH - GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Diegos: "You have had great personal success with TSV 1860 Munich in the German Bundesliga, especially last season where you played in every game. You get to scrub the back of a true Aussie legend, Ned Zelic, in the TSV showers after each training session and game. Has Ned finally taken The Four Diegos advice and waxed his back?"

Agostino: "Let's get one thing straight - he scrubs my back! As far as Ned waxing his back is concerned, I have no comment to make about that because I'm sure it will get back to him some how and I have to see him everyday."



The Four Diegos

(Unofficial) Ericsson Cup Soccer OZ Awards

Nomination for the "Best Performance in a Post-Match Press Conference" Award of the Season

1. Adelaide City coach, Zoran Matic for this gem after his team's woeful effort against the Knights in Round 20...

"We completely died. We stuffed it up completely. This team is not fit mentally. In the second half there was so much space between our back line and the attack, you could have sold it as a vacant block. But I will fix it."

Nomination for the "Most Innovative Coaching Strategy" of the Season

Goes to (the now former) Carlton Coach Eddie Krncevic who, when asked how he was going to combat John Markovski's goal-scoring threat against his team in Round 13, replied, "Take him out night clubbing the night before the game."

Nomination for the "I'm Sure We Can Win... I Think!" Award of the Season

"It will be good to meet my old mate David Mitchell. Sydney United are a great side playing a bit below their capability, they are certainly beatable - even by us!"

The big headed, super confident caretaker coach of the Canberra Cosmos, Tony Brennan, prior to his team's Round 12 game versus Sydney United. Surprise, surprise, the Cosmos lost 2-0.

Nominations for the "Jimmy & Tammy Baker - Praise the Lord - it's a miracle" Award Of The Season

1. Marconi coach, Frank "I've found God" Farina who after his team's unconvincing 2-1 win in Round 26 against Carlton, proclaimed to his brethren "Yes Jesus, Holy Mary - there is a God - We are still alive".

2. A disappointed 'Visa Vid Horvat' after the Knights game versus the Sharks in Round 10 said...

"It's the first time I can say that I'm really disappointed with a result and I'm tempted to ask why God doesn't like us."

Nomination for the 'It was El Nino's Fault' Award of the Season

Goes to Sydney Olympic coach, Branco Culina who said after his loss against Marconi in Round 9...

"We weren't beaten by a better side. We were beaten by other elements."

Nomination for the "Best Calls" Award of the Season

"Usually it takes two to tango but it takes three to tango when you tango with John Markovski"

ABC TV special comments man - Alan Hunter - Perth Glory V Northern Spirit in Round 2.

"If he is 10 metres from the ball then I'm an astronaut, referee!"

...make it two to Senor Hunter, this time during the game between Sydney Olympic and Adelaide City in Round 15.

"Pezos is right up Lozanovski's clacker!"

C7 guest commentator Alan Davidson describing how tightly Adelaide Sharks defender, Paul Pezos was marking

Sth Melbourne's Goran Lozanovski during their Round 2 encounter.

Nomination for the "Best Nickname" Award of the Season

'The Flying Sheep Farmer'

Nickname given to Sth Melbourne KIWI international striker, Vaughan Coveny by C7 - Sports Australia Soccer Commentator - Greg Blake

Nomination for the "I'll Say Something Nice About You If You Say Something Nice About Me - NOT" Award of the Season...

Goes to Northern Spirit coach, Graham Arnold and Carlton coach, Eddie Krncevic in Round 3.

In reply to Arnold's description of Carlton as being 'One Hell of a Team'

Krncevic said "To be honest, I don't think Northern Spirit is much chop!"

Please Eddie, learn the script...

Nomination for the "Gees I Wish I Hadn't Said That" Award of the Season

"We'll wine them and dine them and be perfect hosts on Sunday but the points are staying here."

Pre-game prediction from Knights president, Steve Mandekic prior to the round 8 clash with South Melbourne.

South reportedly ate well, drank well, thanked the Knights for their hospitality and took the points anyway.

Nomination for the "I wish I was Nostradamus" Award of the Season

Goes to ABC TV soccer special comments man, Alan Hunter, who proclaimed prior to the game between Sydney Olympic & Marconi in Round 18 that...

"This game has got the makings of an absolute cliffhanger!"

For the record Sydney Olympic won the game 5-0 and should have won 55-0.

Good try Big Al... just remind us not to ask you for a Melbourne Cup tip next year.

Nomination for the "Good advice to young aussies about to sign for Leeds United"

Award of the Season

Goes to Marconi coach, Frank Farina who, when asked what advice he would offer to young Aussie players who are wanted by Leeds United, but told they cannot play for Australia if they sign, replied:

"Sign the contract then tell them to get stuffed".

"Best Recruiting Drive" Award of the Season

Goes to Adelaide Sharks coach, Adrian Santrac who in the lead up to the game against Melbourne Knights in Round 25 asked the question:

"Anyone want a game?"

StarTips

Some of Australia's leading Soccer identities selections for today's game.

RAUL BLANCO

(Coach Olyroos, caretaker Coach Socceroos)

South Melbourne

100%

Experience will tell in the grand final, and South Melbourne have been there and done that. They have the players, the blend of experience and youth and it will see them through.

ZELJKO KALAC

(Socceroo, formerly with Sydney United, currently with RODA JC in the Dutch 1st Division)

Sydney United

3-1

I picked Sydney United for obvious reasons, being the minor premiers, they are obviously the best team in the League!

LES SCHEINFLUG

(National Youth Coach)

South Melbourne

3-2

I like Sydney United but feel the more established champions will win it.

SHANE PRYCE

(Captain, Newcastle Breakers)

South Melbourne

2-0

Their experience and playing in their home state is a big difference with Souths having the better and big match players.

LEE STERREY

(Coach, Newcastle Breakers)

Sydney United

1-0

With a young team, they might get Souths the second time around in what would cap off a sensational year for United.

JOHN ALOISI

(Socceroo, formerly with Adelaide City, currently with Coventry City in the English Premier League)

South Melbourne

2-1

I'll back South because they're playing in Melbourne, and they've got finals experience - they won last year and they'll do it again this year.

VINCE GRELLA

(Olyroo Midfielder, formerly with Carlton currently with Empoli in the Italian Serie-A)

South Melbourne

1-0

Because they're a very strong team and they've been in that situation before

PETER ZOIS

(Olyroo Goalkeeper, formerly with South Melbourne, currently with NAC Breda in the Dutch 1st Division)

South Melbourne

2-1

Maybe I'm being a little bit bias but going on last season, they've got more experience they've played well in the semis and I think they're quite hungry to do the double this season.

RAPHAEL BOVE

(Olyroo Defender, formerly with Sydney Olympic, currently with Heerenveen in the Dutch First Division)

Sydney United

1-0

Sydney United will go out, have some fun and snatch a victory - David Mitchell will have the team relaxed, while the pressure will be on South Melbourne for back to backs.



Raul Blanco

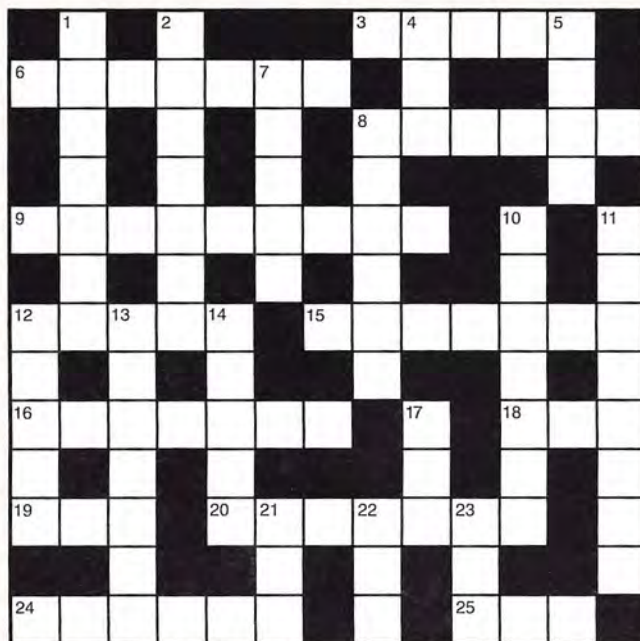


John Aloisi



Raphael Bove

On The Ball Soccerwords



ACROSS:

3. Hosted the 1962 World Cup
6. This season's leading goalscorer
8. Arguably Brazil's greatest goalkeeper
9. Nickname of Marconi
12. Often enjoyed at a game
15. Three-time European player of the year
16. Ericsson Cup coach of the year in 1989

18. A delicate chip

19. It gives a soccer ball shape

20. Perth Glory's much travelled forward

24. Former Socceroo goalkeeper, who sounds rapacious

25. What strikers aim for

DOWN:

1. Medal for today's fairest and best player
2. NSL top goalscorer in 1996-97 season
4. Perth Glory's Kiwi defender
5. Ericsson Cup leading goalscorer in 1985
7. Socceroo star now playing in Germany
8. Winner of English player of the year
10. An Ericsson Cup referee
11. Top South Melbourne striker
12. Brazilians do it when celebrating
13. Scotland's Diamonds
14. Manchester United Irish midfielder
17. Sometimes it prevents a goal
21. Sydney United striker
22. It covered the Ericsson Cup this season
23. Noise

Solution for this Week's Soccerwords

ACROSS: 3 Chile, 6 Cardozo, 8 Glymar, 9 Stallions, 12 Snack, 15 Platini, 16 Mariani, 18 Lob, 19 Air, 20 Edwards, 24 Greedy, 25 Net
DOWN: 1 Marston, 2 Zdrilic, 4 Hay, 5 Egan, 7 Zelic, 8 Ginola, 10 Shields, 11 Trimboli, 12 Samba, 13 Airdrie, 14 Keane, 17 Bar, 21 Day, 22 ABC, 23 Din

So you want to be a Socceroo!

They all started somewhere, learning their trade as juniors before following their dream to play in the coveted green and gold jersey.

Mark Bosnich, Harry Kewell, and Ned Zelic are an example of hundreds of players who have carved out an illustrious career playing both for Australia and their European clubs. They are also fully aware of the importance of developing players at a young age.

That is where Rooball comes in. Essentially Rooball is kids' soccer. That is, they play on smaller fields with less players, fewer rules and modified equipment. As a result, there are more goals and a lot more fun.

Rooball helps young players develop the skills needed for all positions and players can later make a decision about which position they enjoy the most.

Divided into four age groups, both boys and girls are encouraged to play. Under-7s and Under-8s play a six-a-side on a quarter of an adult sized pitch. Under-9s and Under-10s play nine-a-side on half an adult sized pitch.

Rooball helps develop active children, as it lets them exercise in a fun and safe environment. There is little chance of injury in Rooball as players must wear shinpads to protect themselves and referees ensure fair play.



Socceroo star Ned Zelic.

It's about children playing together, making friends, having fun and learning the benefits of team participation and sport. It's the way soccer is meant to be played... just for fun!

Rooball games are played between local teams so there is less travelling and less expense. All that is really asked of parents is your support and positive encouragement of the Rooball spirit; that is emphasis on fun and participation rather than on winning!

However, parents can become involved as referees, coaches or managers of Rooball teams.

There is no obligation towards parents as Rooball clubs are set up and ready to roll. If you want to be involved in your children's sporting activities, there is always a place for parents on the Rooball team.

Rooball is generally played in the clubs from March to September each year. Most clubs accept registrations from February onwards. A minimum club registration fee provides great value. All that a player needs are a pair of soccer boots, shinpads and a soccer ball to practise with at home.

Schools often play Rooball all year round.

For further information on playing Rooball, please contact your State/Territory soccer Association or local club.



Rooballers in action.

Autographs



We're committed
to supporting
our future champions.

ERICSSON



- 1** Michael PETKOVIC
- 2** Steve IOSIFIDIS
- 3** Fausto DE AMICIS
- 4** Nick ORLIC
- 5** Con BLATSIS
- 6** David CLARKSON
- 7** Steve PANOPOULOS
- 8** Vaughan COVENY
- 9** Paul TRIMBOLI (c)
- 10** Michael CURCIJA
- 11** John ANASTASIADIS
- 13** Adrian CUZZUPE
- 14** Jason POLAK
- 15** Goran LOZANOVSKI
- 16** George GOUTZOULIS
- 17** Jim TSEKINIS
- 18** Robert LIPAROTI
- 20** Chris JONES
- 22** Mustafa MUSTAFA

Coach – Ange POSTECOGLOU



- 1** Andrew CREWS
- 2** David BARRETT
- 4** Velimir KUPRESAK (c)
- 5** Richard PLESA
- 6** Joe VRKIC
- 7** Jacob BURNS
- 8** Walter ARDONE
- 9** Mile STERJOVSKI
- 10** Nathan DAY
- 11** Steve BERRY
- 12** Drew LAURENCE
- 13** Joe MORIC
- 14** Joe CALETA
- 15** Danny TOWNSEND
- 16** Abbas SAAD
- 17** Michael SANTALAB
- 18** David MITCHELL
- 19** Joel GRIFFITHS
- 20** Barney SMITH
- 21** Steve EAGLETON
- 22** Tom MARIC
- 23** Dominic USALJ
- 24** Robert ANGIEVSKI
- 25** Ante MORIC
- 26** Daniel KUKUCKA
- 28** Peter BENNETT
- 30** Mike GIBSON

Coach – David MITCHELL

Today's Match Officials

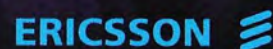
Referee: Simon Micallef

Assistant Referees: John Bowdler
Carlo Graser

4th Official: Mark Shield

Match Inspector: Roger Lamb

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